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SHOULD SUCH A FAITH OFFEND?

SERMONS AND ADDRESSES

BY

ERNEST WILLIAM BARNES

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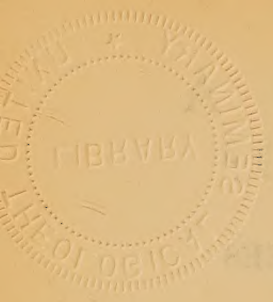

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TO

THAT BEST AND MOST SEVERE OF CRITICS

MY WIFE

UNITED THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

NOTE

In connection with the preparation of this volume I have to acknowledge kind help received from the Editors of *The Modern Churchman*, *The Church of England Newspaper*, *The Guardian*, and *The Christian World Pulpit*. Canon Storr, on behalf of the Anglican Evangelical Group Movement, has courteously granted me permission to print an article from *The Inner Life* (Hodder & Stoughton, 1924). To Mr. J. S. Bezzant, Vice-Principal of Ripon Hall, Oxford, I am most grateful for the way in which he has allowed me to turn to him for assistance while the sermons and addresses here gathered together were being collected and printed. My secretary, Miss N. M. V. Owen, daughter of the late Bishop of St. David's, has been indefatigable in the help which she has given me.

E. W. B.

November 10*th*, 1927.

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A PRAYER FOR THE CHURCH

GIVE Thy blessing, O Father, to the Church to which we belong. Where it is corrupt, purify it. Where it is weak, strengthen it. Where it is in error, enlighten it. Fill it with Thy Spirit, the Holy Spirit of charity and truth. So guide its members that they welcome knowledge as Thy gift. Preserve them from the bitterness that is born of ignorance and self-love. And fill them all with zeal to preach in act and word the Gospel of Thy Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PREFACE

At the request of a number of friends and correspondents I have in the present volume gathered together certain sermons and addresses typical of my teaching during the last seven years. In the preparation of this book a selection has had to be made from a very large amount of material. I have tried to make such a choice that the most characteristic and most criticised elements in my teaching should be fully represented. While this teaching is said to have given " real offence " to some, others tell me that it embodies the only sort of defence of the Christian outlook that is possible today. It will surprise certain readers that, in practically every sermon and address here printed, the positive faith which I affirm occupies more space than the repudiation of false or obsolete beliefs. It is, I conceive, highly necessary in such an age of religious decay and disorder as the present, that the affirmations of positive faith shall be emphasised, while negations and criticisms shall only be introduced in so far as they are necessary to clear away obstacles to reasonable spiritual understanding. When, however, excerpts from addresses appear in the public press, such are often chosen as will by their strength excite hostile attention. These are seized upon by controversialists. Almost inevitably by being removed from their setting they convey a wrong impression; sometimes they are gravely distorted by partisans unable to quote correctly. And in the end many good people gain an

entirely wrong impression of what has been said. Some such, as they read this volume, may find in the modern presentation of faith an unexpected inspiration.

* * * * *

Most of what is here printed has been compared with the original type-scripts and represents unchanged what I originally wrote. Occasionally for the sake of clearness a sentence has been modified or an explanatory footnote introduced. But, as all the sermons and addresses in this volume had been carefully prepared, I have not thought it necessary to make important changes in them. In the belief that I ought to advocate truth without giving needless pain, words and phrases were originally well weighed, and I sought a due balance between affirmation and denial. By the result of such efforts I am content to be judged. In view of the controversy aroused by the address on " Sacramental Truth and Falsehood " (No. XXX), it is reproduced without change from its original form.

* * * * *

Some of my friends, and among them men for whose work I have a warm regard, maintain that a Bishop should neither criticise nor condemn beliefs which may be lawfully held within the English Church. A Bishop, they say, ought to be an impartial administrator, not a partisan. The plea as thus presented sounds plausible and deserves examination. I omit for the moment the question as to how far the sacramental beliefs which I have challenged are such as English Churchmen may lawfully hold. With this omission I would first of all distinguish between the administrative and the

teaching functions of a Bishop. In administering his Diocese a Bishop cannot exact or expect uniformity of opinion. He must seek to maintain law and order; but he must tolerate much error if it is the sort of error which the Church does not condemn. For instance, the formularies of the Church of England have not been effectively revised since the rise of Copernican astronomy. If, then, a clergyman cared to affirm constantly that the earth is the fixed centre of the Universe, and to criticise his Bishop for holding a different view, that Bishop could take no disciplinary action against him. But to argue that therefore his Bishop must not contradict his teaching seems to me an impossible contention. A Bishop, by the tradition of the Church Universal, is especially concerned with the maintenance of sound doctrine. At his consecration he pledges himself to be ready "to banish and drive away all erroneous and strange doctrine contrary to God's Word." Sacramental errors, which seem to him to repudiate the teaching of the Bible as interpreted by the formularies of his Church, it is therefore his duty to denounce. If by "God's Word" we are to mean the Bible only, (God's Word written), the Bishop's consecration pledge does not involve the necessity of repudiating obsolete scientific beliefs which were held when the books of the Bible took shape. But if in the term "God's Word" we rightly include the continued enlightenment of mankind by the Holy Spirit of truth, then a Bishop must also welcome all new knowledge that is soundly established and show how it combines with and strengthens faith in Christ.

It is surely an intolerable proposition that a Bishop should be silent on all questions whereon differences of opinion may exist more or less legitimately within the

Church. To impose such constraint upon him would often be to hinder him from speaking on vital issues, and would make him a mere register of well-established opinions. No Bishop under such conditions could be an effective teacher in the Church; and this would apply especially at just those epochs of change when wise teaching is especially necessary. Shades of Athanasius, of Augustine, of Cranmer, of Tait, not by such dexterous silences did you take your places among men memorable in the history of the Church! A Bishop to-day is often so hard driven by a multitude of petty engagements that he has little time for patient thought: if, in addition, he is to avoid the great divisive issues of his era, he will only too probably end by making a virtue of superficiality. I remember how once at Cambridge an undergraduate was asked his opinion of an episcopal sermon in the College Chapel. "Inoffensive chatter," was the boy's trenchant reply.

I maintain, then, that not only has a Bishop a right, but that it is also his duty, to proclaim and maintain truth. If, in times of reaction, primitive errors reappear or superstitious fancies renew their strength, it is for him, however unpleasant the task, to point out the dangers which attach to such forms of religious degeneration. Equally when, by the progress of secular knowledge, opinions which have religious associations are shown to be false, it is a Bishop's duty so to combine old spiritual truths with the new knowledge that this knowledge is indeed "baptised into Christ."

* * * * *

Much in the present volume expresses my conviction that the main fabric of Christian belief is unharmed by acceptance of the biological doctrine of man's descent

from an ape-like stock. Belief in evolution is becoming as much a commonplace in this country as belief in Copernican astronomy ; and almost all now recognise that Christian theology among us must be adapted to meet the changed standpoint. Hence the whole theological scheme reared by Augustine on the basis of the Fall must be rejected. It is a matter for surprise and regret that the necessity for such rejection has been so seldom admitted. The valuable books of Dr. Tennant[1] were almost pioneer work : yet they did not appear until the present century, though Darwin's *Origin of Species* was published in 1859 and his *Descent of Man* in 1871. Moreover, Dr. Tennant, like most theological pioneers, received rough criticism rather than thanks ; and there have been singularly few preachers able and ready to express in the popular language of the pulpit his honest and patient thought.

The controversies of recent years have, however, done good by forcing Christian theologians and preachers to admit that they can no longer claim as historical the stories of Adam and Eve, the Garden of Eden, and the Fall. Already in consequence there are signs of a violent reaction from belief in the infallibility of the Old Testament. I fear that, as usual, the pendulum will swing too far and that there will be a tendency to disparage the spiritual excellence of the Hebrew scriptures. We need to emphasise that Christianity cannot be severed from its Judaic background without being harmed. Almost inevitably such severance will cause it to develop unwholesome affinities with the mystery-religion type of faith. " The sombre

[1] F. R. Tennant, *The Origin and Propagation of Sin* (Cambridge University Press, 1902) : *Sources of the Doctrines of the Fall and Original Sin* (*ibid.* 1903). *Vide* p. 29 of the present volume.

insight of the Wisdom literature, the inspired internationalism of the Book of Jonah, the spiritual confidence of the Psalms, and, above all, the ethical monotheism of the great Hebrew prophets are supremely important in our religious heritage. Because we abandon Jewish cosmogony we must not forget that to understand Christ aright we need to know the spiritual development of His race."

* * * * *

In my teaching of recent years I have emphasised the truth of the biological doctrine of evolution largely for the sake of our younger educated men and women. At Cambridge, and in Conferences at Swanwick and elsewhere, I came to realise that a Church apparently committed to "Fundamentalism" could no longer hold the respect or win the confidence of educated youth. I found equally that there was much restiveness with regard to certain developments of sacramental doctrine. But it was only when I became a Bishop that I fully realised how vast a departure from the traditional Anglican position had taken place in the teaching of those among us who desire to assimilate our sacramental beliefs to doctrines of the Roman communion. *All the serious administrative difficulties of Anglican Bishops to-day are due to newly-introduced practices which have no sense or meaning unless some erroneous doctrine akin to transubstantiation is held.* It is quite certain that we cannot get in the Church either harmony or unity based on a common spiritual understanding, while opposing sacramental beliefs are, as at present, struggling for mastery. Only by argument, patient, clear and cogent, can error be banished and truth affirmed. In the interests of law and order

within the Church of England it is the duty of its Bishops to define its sacramental position. By argument based on knowledge and reason they should justify the conclusions which they reach. They might then be able not only to bring peace to the Church, but also to persuade many now outside it that our sacraments are truly the means of God's revelation of Himself.

To many a boy or girl at adolescence there comes a moment when, as it were, scales drop from the eyes and the magic beauty of poetry is revealed. Before the moment of illumination Keats, it may be, or Wordsworth meant little or nothing: after it they are doors through which the spirit enters the delectable land. Nature also, like poetry, can be a sacrament; and, to him who suddenly has eyes to see, the bare hill-side will show forth the power and glory of the living God. The sacraments of our faith should at the very least be not less natural, not less wholesome, than those of nature or art. When linked to the spiritual simplicity and sincerity of Jesus they have a great power to inspire and cleanse. It may be that some supreme thrill of adolescence is never recaptured; but none the less, the flame of the spiritual life is the brighter for renewal through sacramental worship. Yet if such worship is deliberately associated with superstitious fancies our younger people will stand aloof from it For them religious worship and teaching must be like sunshine, bright and clear, free from the mists of the long night out of which humanity is emerging.

Though my sermons and addresses in the present volume serve with some completeness to elucidate my sacramental position, I may here summarise its main features. It is essentially the doctrine which was

finally established in the Church of England at the Reformation. Central within it is the belief that in a sacrament a material object can be a vehicle of divine grace. The bread and wine used in Holy Communion can be such vehicles and for that reason we may associate with them symbolical values. But as a result of consecration no spiritual presence is attached to, or inheres in, the elements. *The root principle of idolatry is belief in a Deity localised in material objects through the invocation of a priest.* In opposition to any such type of belief it must be affirmed that a Sacrament is a psychological process, in the course of which the worshipper makes contact with God or the spiritual world. Thus the whole service of Holy Communion is the Sacrament: the term "sacrament" is wrongly applied to the elements which are but a part of the whole. Because a sacrament is a psychological process it cannot be "reserved." "You can no more reserve a psychological process than you can reserve an exploding shell."[1]

Of the reality, as it comes through sacramental worship, of that sense of the nearness and power and love of God which we call Divine Grace, none who have experienced it can doubt. Equally it is admitted that the means whereby we receive the Divine grace are a mystery. But the explanations given alike by transubstantiation and by the analogous doctrine of an objective real presence in the consecrated elements are to be rejected because they are unjustifiable rationalisations of a true experience. A generation ago the fact of sin was assumed even by theologians of eminence to justify belief in the Fall: religious experience was in this connection falsely explained. To-day

[1] *Vide* p. 227.

likewise the fact that grace is received in the Holy Communion is assumed to justify an equally irrational belief that some spiritual change has taken place in the bread and wine themselves as a consequence of their consecration. I have insisted that the existence of such a postulated change could be disproved by experiment. Some to whom the science of experimental psychology is strange have imagined that I proposed to apply a chemical test to the consecrated elements! Needless to say, I made no such childish suggestion. What I urge is that "the dogma of transubstantiation only differs from that of an objective real presence in the consecrated elements in that the former rests on a now discarded philosophy of matter while the latter has no philosophical basis at all. Both dogmas belong to a domain of religious psychology in which experimental tests can be made. It is surely fair (even if not desirable) to suggest that such tests could be reverently carried out in a suitable place. Moreover, since these tests will show that no man by his spiritual capacity can distinguish consecrated from unconsecrated bread, we can assume that the consecration of material objects causes no spiritual change in them. In short, spiritual grace is given, not to the elements which are its vehicles in the Sacrament of Holy Communion, but to the worshipper who takes, eats and drinks as he comes with faith and prayer and love to Christ."

Some of my critics complain that, had I an adequate metaphysic, I should not thus turn from philosophy to psychology. I can only reply that I cannot accept any metaphysic which reaches conclusions not justified by our knowledge of the external world; and experiments in psychology are simply a way to such know-

ledge. I will go further and add that philosophical inquiries into the nature of matter have been as profoundly influenced by the General Theory of Relativity as have similar enquiries into the nature of time. How far my critics have an adequate knowledge of these modern researches I know not. I have personally given no little attention of late to the Tensor Calculus and to the conclusions reached by its aid; and I am quite sure that not through such researches will Catholic theologians get a metaphysic which will re-establish transubstantiation. I commend to them the following passage from a recent work by Mr. Bertrand Russell:[1]

"There are parts of physics which, so far, lie outside the general theory of relativity, but there are no parts of physics to which it is not in some degree relevant. And its importance to philosophy is perhaps even greater than its importance to physics. It has, of course, been seized upon by philosophers of different schools as affording support to their respective nostrums; St. Thomas, Kant, and Hegel are claimed to have anticipated it. But I do not think that any of the philosophers who make these suggestions have taken the trouble to understand the theory. For my part, I do not profess to know exactly what its philosophical consequences will prove to be, but I am convinced that they are far-reaching, and quite different from what they seem to philosophers who are ignorant of mathematics."

I turn from a realm with which, so far as I can see,

[1] *The Analysis of Matter* (Kegan Paul, 1927), p. 55. The student who desires to know how extraordinarily abstract matter has become in modern relativity-physics might consult A. S. Eddington's Essay on *The Domain of Physical Science*, in *Science, Religion and Reality* (Sheldon Press, 1925). For a full understanding of this Essay it is necessary to read the same author's *Mathematical Theory of Relativity* (Cambridge University Press, 1923). In Weyl's *Space, Time, Matter* (Methuen, 1922), there are a number of interesting conclusions and speculations as to the nature of matter.

the sacramental principle of Christian theology has no connection, and I re-state my position in words already made public :

(*a*) The real presence of Christ can be with His followers in public worship. He is present wherever two or three are gathered in His name.
(*b*) A special solemnity attaches to the celebration of the Lord's Supper, inasmuch as for most Christians the sense of Christ's presence is then strengthened. For such it is a sacrament, the "fellowship meal," the communion "with each other and the Lord."
(*c*) There is no *objective* real presence of Christ attached to the bread and wine used in Holy Communion.

In such teaching we are safe from those morbid overgrowths of sacramentalism which end in veneered paganism. Let me give an example :[1] "It is natural that a dying Christian should wish to receive the Holy Communion with his nearest and dearest. Two or three are then gathered together in Christ's name. As death approaches they remember the death of the Son of Man and in spirit are joined with Him in Kingdom. In such a rite there is a true and beautiful sacramentalism. There is also a moral stimulus, for as the worshippers take part in the service they know that, whether they live or die, they must live unto the Lord. But when superstition enters in, and with it the belief that a consecrated wafer has spiritual properties, we approach a region of pagan custom and fancy. As against such fancies we must assert that Christ's judgment after death will be a moral judgment. No sacramental mechanism can alter it. We do not

[1] From an address to the Anglican Evangelical Group Movement at Birmingham on December 8th, 1926.

need to be fortified against the love of God, and no rites of the Church can fortify us against His justice. A wafer by itself has no more value than a penny placed in the hand of a dying man to pay his fare to the grim ferryman who shall take him safely across the Styx. The Sacraments are rightly used when, and only when, they inspire men to live good lives. When they become associated with magical or mechanical ideas, their influence becomes disastrous, for then they sunder religion from morality. Such consequences are familiar to students of history. The Reformation was a protest, in the name of truth, against the moral abuses which were encouraged by the false pagan beliefs entrenched in mediæval Catholicism."

It is possible that those are right who contend that such paganism does not exist within the English Church to-day. Whether it may not come into existence is another matter. Cranmer, who had had experience of it, dreaded its revival, as when he wrote :

> " The very body of the tree, or rather, the roots of the weeds, is the popish doctrine of transubstantiation, of the real presence of Christ's flesh and blood in the sacrament of the altar (as they call it) and of the sacrifice and oblation of Christ made by the priest for the salvation of the quick and the dead. Which roots, if they be suffered to grow in the Lord's vineyard, they will overspread all the ground again with the old errors and superstitions."

Those who dispute the sacramental principles maintained in the present volume will do well to consider whether a Free Church minister or a layman can by consecration cause a spiritual presence to inhere in the material elements. As Lightfoot showed in his Essay on *The Christian Ministry*, the laity and their ministers

down to the time of Tertullian were alike regarded as priests. In the absence of clergy a layman could present the Eucharistic offerings : he could " exercise the rights of a priest in cases of necessity." In full accord with such doctrine the Anglican representatives in the discussion of reunion with representatives of the Free Churches declared : [1]

" It seems to us to be in accord with the Lambeth Appeal to say, as we are prepared to say, that the ministries which we have in view in this memorandum, ministries which imply a sincere intention to preach Christ's word and administer the Sacraments as Christ has ordained, and to which authority so to do has been solemnly given by the Churches concerned, are real ministries of Christ's Word and Sacraments in the Universal Church."

If this position be accepted we must equally agree that any layman or laywoman who devoutly, and not perversely, celebrated the Holy Communion would effect a real consecration whereby the bread and wine became for the devout worshipper channels of Divine grace. Such action would, according to our Church order, be irregular. But can we doubt that at a sick-bed communion thus made under some special necessity Christ's presence would be real to those who sought Him ? We do not belittle Church order if we allow that God assuredly does not limit Himself by the rules which may seem good to some particular Christian communion. To those who examine in all its implications the fact that there are millions of Christians who have abandoned episcopacy, mechanical sacramental beliefs become increasingly unreal. Moreover when once the idea of the mechanical efficiency of priestly action is abandoned it is difficult to retain the

[1] G. K. A. Bell, *Documents on Christian Unity* (S.P.C.K.), p. 159.

associated belief in spiritual properties located in material objects. Thus, by reflecting upon the actual situation in the Christian world to-day, we rise to a truer, more spiritual, more Christian conception of the nature of a sacrament. We who are members of Christ's Church are all priests, equally capable of bringing Christ into human life by our service to Him. The minister and the worshipper are equal before God: the prayers of each are equally acceptable to God. The minister acts merely as their representative when the people are gathered together in sacramental worship; and God's response is a response to prayer and need. No Christian will deny that there is a mystery in the sacrament of Holy Communion; but it is part of a wider mystery. How can man know aught of God? How comes it that we are so sure that He reveals Himself in the great moments of life? That our certainty brings great joy is no answer; but for most of us it suffices.

* * * * *

Inevitably the present stress in the Church of England raises anew the question of toleration. To the political creed which I learned from Acton I am still loyal. As a liberal I abhor persecution and am prepared to trust, and desire to get others to trust, not in force, but in the slow efficiency of argument, the persuasive power of reason. Yet, if I wrote anything new at the present juncture, there are some who might read into the most general principles allusions to particular incidents of current controversy. I will therefore reiterate my standpoint by quoting from a St. Bartholomew's Day sermon[1] which, though preached

[1] Preached in Westminster Abbey on August 24th, 1913.

fourteen years ago, still expresses my considered judgment on mistaken zeal.

" The psychology of persecution is comparatively simple. When a man of real piety sees the ideas which he venerates ignored, objects which he believes to be holy scorned, he burns with a righteous indignation which no mean motive of personal ambition or revenge can kindle. The strength of his conviction carries with it not only a presage of victory based on the belief that God will defend the right, but also the martyr's contempt of death in a righteous cause. It is thus that there is no adversary so formidable as a man sure that he is fighting the battle of the Lord of Hosts, no antagonist so relentless in pursuing opponents as he who is convinced that it is his duty to make them an acceptable sacrifice to his God.

" Throughout the Old Testament we see prophets inspired by this fury of holiness, kings use it to animate their people, poets enshrine it in national hymns. And at first sight it seems to be a noble and fair flower springing from the cultivation of all that is best in the human heart. Of course even men filled with such fire admit that the zeal for persecution is dangerous. All recognise that a love of battle and a joy of destruction are among the lower passions of mankind. And inferior men, animated by such passions, are usually the instruments by which the righteous secure the conquest of evil. Our analysis then leads us at once to the conclusion that Intolerance is dangerous ; but we can characterise it still more unfavourably. Apart from all ethical considerations, the verdict of history condemns it as both stupid and criminal. In spite of the thousand instances in which it can be justified from the Old Testament, notwithstanding that it seems the natural product of the deepest piety, true though it may be that, since the time of Constantine, it has been practised by every great branch of the Christian Church, persecution, in however mild a form, is usually both a mistake and a crime. It is a mistake because it so rarely succeeds. It is a crime because in the name of virtue you unchain the baser passions of mankind. The success of intolerance is always

momentary; its ultimate failure remains to hamper and depress those who inherit the legacy which it bequeaths.

"Consider as an illustration the massacre of St. Bartholomew. This event was primarily political and not religious in its inception. Catherine, the Queen-Mother, and her son believed that they could never uphold the authority of the Crown so long as the Huguenots shared political power in Catholic France. And so the massacre was planned. But its success was rendered possible by the knowledge that it would be approved by the authorities at Rome, and that throughout Europe fervent Catholics of genuine religious instinct and purity of life would rejoice at its consummation. Its immediate success was undoubted; some seven thousand Huguenots, including the foremost leaders of the party, were butchered. Good men exulted, "influenced by no present injury or momentary rage but by the permanent and incurable perversion of moral sense wrought by a distorted piety.'[1] A Papal Bull exhorted Catholics to pray that Charles might pursue his auspicious enterprise to the end, and so complete what he had begun so well. Vasari, renowned alike as a painter and a historian of painting, was summoned from Florence to commemorate the event by a painting on the wall of the Hall of Kings at the Vatican.

"All who have been to Rome remember the Sistine Chapel. It is famous in Art for Michael Angelo's superb frescoes. In a very real sense it is the Holy of Holies of the Vatican Palace. For in that Chapel masses are said on the decease of a Pope; in it the commemoration of the passion of Christ is offered when his successor is crowned. As the procession moves with stately reverence through the Sala Regia to the Chapel it passes Vasari's masterpiece, 'Strages Huguenottorum'; and, in the words of Lord Acton, convinced Roman Catholic and great historian, 'the shameful scene may still be traced upon the wall where for three centuries it has insulted every Pontiff who has entered the Sistine Chapel.'[2] The massacre of

[1] Lord Acton, *History of Freedom and Other Essays* (Macmillan, 1907), p. 123.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 135.

St. Bartholomew is then condemned at the bar of History. It was a crime, the memory of which still stains the fair fame of the Church which approved it; it was stupid statesmanship, for it drove the ablest citizens of France to seek shelter in alien lands, and to promote the prosperity of rival nations.

"When a century later we pass to the controversies which culminated in the Act of Uniformity of 1662, we are at first bewildered in our judgment by the greater complexity of the position. The Presbyterians under the Long Parliament had proscribed the Prayer Book; the Bishops at the Restoration remembered their wrongs, and were not prepared to make liberal concessions. And thus the Savoy Conference proved abortive. The Anglican Church won an immediate triumph, and its leaders exulted in repressive legislation whose ultimate failure left half the Christian energy and enthusiasm of the country outside the National Church. Judged simply by the canon of final success, the Act of Uniformity was a mistake; and when we think of the deprivations, the exile or imprisonment to which it condemned thousands of pious men, we must admit that the persecution engendered by its intolerance was a crime.

"What is the result of this brief consideration of the two examples of intolerance and persecution associated with St. Bartholomew's Day? Each was a stupendous failure; each was approved by a great branch of the Church of Christ. In each case that Church disregarded the authority of our Lord.

"No phase of the spiritual genius of Jesus of Nazareth is more remarkable than His teaching on the subject of persecution. None bears clearer witness to His inspiration; none impressed His immediate followers more powerfully or aided His missionaries more signally. Think of Him as a Jewish boy carefully instructed in the Old Testament, His mind saturated with such examples as Elijah's savage triumph over the priests of Baal at Mount Carmel. A boy living among a people animated by stories of the Maccabees, contemptuous of their Roman conquerors, belonging to a nation whose very basis was a religious unity, with a passion for their national God ever ready

to flame into insurrection. Of such an One you would indeed expect, in no metaphorical sense of the words, that He would bring not peace but a sword. And yet what do we get? We have the parable of the tares with its definite implication; we have also the great Beatitude, 'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven. Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in Heaven.' Of all unexpected teaching this is the most surprising. It seems so paradoxical that we understand and almost instinctively approve Christian bodies which have ignored it. But the sayings of Jesus which I have quoted are no chance utterances, whose meaning has been warped by divorce from their right context. They are the brilliant summary of one of the vital features of Christ's point of view; they reflect an attitude consistently maintained by Him in word and deed throughout His life. So often did He impress this attitude on His early followers that it dominated their lives and teaching. Catholic Christianity in its nascent stages evolved the conception that it would make its appeal to the world by the active virtues of the community, that submission and endurance were the best weapons, by which to combat the persecution of paganism, and further, that the Faith would succeed by its inherent strength when its ideals conflicted with other views of life and modes of thought. I plead for unreserved acceptance of this primitive Christian ideal. Persecution is both stupid and wrong; intolerance leads to dangerous paths; Christianity must win its way by the beauty of the lives of its adherents and by the example of their faith. If Christian bodies act in this way they will without doubt suffer. 'In the world ye shall have tribulation,' says Christ in the Gospel. But also the Kingdom of Heaven is a kingdom of men spiritually free, and through freedom alone can men be brought to humble themselves and be born again to enter that Kingdom."

I

THE CHRISTIAN REVELATION AND SCIENTIFIC PROGRESS[1]

"I am the light of the world."—St. John viii. 12.

I HAVE been asked to preach here to-day in connection with the meeting of the British Association which has been held in this city during the past week. My subject is Christ, the Light of the World, and I ask you to think of the Christian revelation and scientific progress. For more than a hundred years there has been strife—sometimes veiled, but more often open—between "religion and science." I use the popular phraseology. More accurately, opinions as to the origin of the earth and of man which were held as a result of Christian tradition have been directly challenged by a succession of novel theories put forward by men of science. At the beginning of last century the foundations of geology were being laid, largely in this country. Gradually it became clear, from a study of our rocks and their fossil remains, that the earth had an almost unimaginable antiquity. The coal which we dig is all that is left of vast tropical forests that once flourished here for tens of thousands of years. In successive ages of vast duration the most diverse forms of animal life have existed in these lands. The East of England has repeatedly for long

[1] A Sermon preached in Cardiff Parish Church to members of the British Association on Sunday, August 29th, 1920.

periods been submerged beneath the sea. The climate has varied from tropical heat to arctic severity. Such knowledge is now a commonplace. But when it was being established by patient discovery during the early part of last century Christian theologians showed violent hostility to the new ideas. The curious may examine the expression of this hostility in Bampton Lectures[1] of the period, which are now happily forgotten. On second-hand bookstalls it is not uncommon to find pathetic attempts to reconcile geology and Genesis such as were continually made even to our own time. But truth triumphed. Just as two centuries earlier the Roman Church had failed to prevent men from receiving the then new knowledge that the earth was not the fixed centre of the Universe, so the new geological ideas won their way despite religious prejudice. Galileo triumphed; it is agreed that the earth moves round the sun; heliocentric books were removed from the Roman Index in 1835. The early nineteenth century geologists triumphed; it is agreed that life has existed on this earth for something like at least a hundred million years. Though in each case the new views are directly opposed to those which Christianity took over from Judaism, we accept them with confidence and surely without harm to our faith in Christ.

But sixty years ago a far more vital controversy began when the Biblical account of man's origin was disputed. A series of discoveries in caves and river-beds in England and in France had made it clear that primitive men had lived here when the mammoth, the cave-lion and the rhinoceros flourished in Western

[1] For details and references the valuable *Development of English Theology in the Nineteenth Century*, of V. F. Storr (Longmans, 1913), p. 181, may be consulted.

Europe.[1] Evidence quickly accumulated which showed that even in this corner of the world human beings existed more than twenty thousand years ago. Hardly had these novel conclusions been reached when a scientific theory was put forward which to the great majority of the religious people of the time seemed destructive of essentials in our faith. It was in the year 1859 that Darwin, in his book, *The Origin of Species*, urged the truth of the doctrine of evolution. At the ensuing Oxford meeting of the British Association, Bishop Wilberforce denounced the idea that man shared a common ancestry with the higher apes. His speech showed deplorable prejudice : it contained a grave error in taste, and Huxley's dignified rebuke of the Bishop is still remembered. For forty years after that famous encounter, evolution was a *casus belli* between religion and science. Christian opinion refused to accept the new doctrine, and religious teachers traversed it by arguments good and bad. It is not fair to regard them with the scorn which the younger people of to-day, trained in modern science, not seldom feel. Evolution was, and still is, not an observed fact, but a theory so probable that no alternative to it can be entertained. Our forefathers saw that acceptance of it meant the abandonment of the story of Adam ; it meant giving up belief in the Fall, and in all the theology built upon it by theologians from St. Paul onwards. Half a century ago, the evolutionary view of man's origin meant that what then appeared to be the strongest reasons for the belief that man has an immortal soul had to

[1] The facts are set out in detail in most text-books of human palæontology. A book that can be especially commended is M. Boule, *Fossil Men* (Oliver & Boyd, 1923). See note on p. 22.

be set aside. But truth has triumphed. In our own time the leaders of Christian thought have, with substantial unanimity, accepted the conclusion that biological evolution is a fact: man is descended from the lower animals. It is even becoming common to say that there is no quarrel between science and religion. But let us be honest. There has, as regards the origin of man, been a sharp conflict between science and traditional religious belief, and the battle has been won by science. Furthermore, let us not when driven from one position take up another that may have to be abandoned. It is dangerous to assert that, although God may not have specially created man, nevertheless He did specially create life. Probably the beginning of terrestrial life was but a stage in the great scheme of natural evolution. We may even expect that some day in the laboratory the man of science will produce living from non-living matter.

The time has now come when we must not try to evade any implications of the theory of natural evolution. We must, not silently but explicitly, abandon religious dogmas which it overthrows. We must, moreover, avoid the temptation to allegorise beliefs which it is no longer possible to hold. Allegory has its value, but it is misused when we employ it to obscure the revolutionary consequences of new knowledge. Religion is too important for us to base it upon, or to join it to, any theories of the nature of the Universe that are doubtful or untrue, even though they are to be found in the Book of Genesis. If Christ is the Light of the World all intellectual discovery must be a part of His revelation. If He rightly explained the nature and purpose of God, then the more accurately we discover how God planned

and guided the Universe so that men have come to exist upon earth, the more natural will it be to accept Christ's teaching. If, on the contrary, the progress of knowledge really discredits the Christian faith, in so far as that faith comes from Jesus Christ, we must sadly admit that Christ cannot have been the Light of mankind. Whatever the consequences, we must accept truth by whomsoever it may have been discovered. A religion not based on truth is vain. A faith that fears the progress of knowledge anticipates its own dissolution.

Now the Christian faith is belief in Christ, in His Person and in His teaching. If Jesus was Divine, His spiritual revelation was of God, His example should point to God. In so far as He was man we expect His secular knowledge to have been that of the Galilean carpenter's son. But we can no longer call ourselves Christians if we find that we are forced to admit that He was morally imperfect or mistaken in His view of God or of man's relation to God. I contend that the progress of science has not forced us to make any such admission. It has not, so far as I can see, destroyed the spiritual infallibility of our Lord, nor done anything to upset His teaching as to the nature of God, or as to man's nature and destiny. It has rather, as I hold, confirmed His insight and made His spiritual wisdom more profoundly impressive. Traditional Christian belief was built up of other things besides Christ's teaching. The early Christian Church took over the old Jewish Scriptures, because it deemed them inspired by God. It placed among its sacred books writings of St. Paul and other early followers of the Lord, because it found that they reflected the Mind of the Master. But there never was a time

when thoughtful Christians could thoughtfully have maintained that the Jewish Scriptures were free from moral and historical error. The cursing Psalms are obviously un-Christian. Books like *Kings* and *Chronicles* are rival histories which disagree in spirit and in detail. As a matter of fact, the Church has never formally defined inspiration. We may say truly that inspired books are of peculiar spiritual value; and we may find such value in St. Paul's teaching though we freely admit that his arguments were sometimes unsound. If we discover that old Christian beliefs which did not come from Christ are erroneous let us not be troubled. For Christianity the perfection of Christ's religious teaching and His revelation of His own supreme excellence are alone of decisive importance. Views of ancient Jews or of early Apostles we can abandon when we discover that they were wrong. Christianity is belief in Christ as Way, Truth, and Life: belief that He was the Light of the World, the Guide of the spiritual evolution of humanity. Christianity does not consist of belief in the scientific value of Genesis or even of belief in the infallibility of St. Paul. Grasp this fact firmly and you will understand that last century's tragic quarrel between religion and science had its origin in a natural, but none the less deplorable, mistake. The mistake was natural, for there is so much of supreme value in the books of the Bible that men will always venerate them profoundly. In the recent past veneration led to exaggeration, to the claim of infallibility. Let us thank God that men of science have forced us to get a more complete, if more difficult, type of understanding of the value of the Bible.

But some will almost certainly inquire whether the

new knowledge has not made it impossible to accept the teaching of Jesus with regard to God and human immortality. Can we accept evolution and yet believe that God, a loving Father, made the world? Can we accept the idea that man and the gorilla have sprung from a common stock and yet hold that man has an immortal soul? I answer emphatically that we can. I remain sure that God, Who is Love, made and rules the world. I am certain that man was created that he might enjoy eternal life in communion with God in the world to come. Do you doubt? Reflect for a few moments. Surely the Universe had a beginning and therefore a Creator. It cannot be a meaningless dance of atoms or whirl of electrons that has gone on for an infinite time. Surely, too, evolution describes a wonderful development, an upward progress, which implies a design in the mind of God. Surely man is on earth the present end of this process, and his spiritual qualities, his love of beauty, goodness, and truth are its crown. Surely, moreover, the God Who by a design extending over hundreds of millions of years has called these spiritual qualities into existence is Himself a Spiritual Being Who made spiritual man for communion with Himself? And, last of all, surely the finest products of evolution have not been made for nothing; and yet, in the distant future, when all life vanishes from the earth, as it certainly must, heroes and saints will in vain have gained knowledge of God, in vain have spent their strength, unless they continue to live eternally in the spiritual world.

Evolution seemed disastrous to faith two generations ago because men fixed their attention narrowly on but one part of the process. Now a wider vista seems

to be coming into view as theories are tested by experiment and unified by the speculative reason. From some fundamental stuff in the Universe the electrons arose. From them came matter. From matter life emerged. With life mind showed itself. From mind the spiritual consciousness of humanity is developing. At every stage, in this vast process and progress, something new has come into existence, we know not how. In the beginning matter, life, mind, the soul of man were not; but now they are. Each has arisen as part of a vast scheme planned by God. And the soul of man is the glory of the whole design. Because of the soul within him man, as Jesus taught, is meant to be the child of God. As our souls grow through the quickening power of the Spirit of Christ we can on earth know and serve the Father of us all and begin to enjoy that Divine communion which is eternal life. The Christ Spirit within us, the "quality of deity," as it has been called, separates us from the animals whence we have sprung just as life separates them from the matter of which they are made. And through the Spirit of Christ we put on immortality, for the things that are of God are eternally with God.

Science describes the process by which man has come into being. Religion takes man as he is and offers him guidance towards his spiritual destiny. Between the religious revelation of Jesus and modern science there is no opposition. The two dovetail into one another with singular exactness. Evolution describes facts; the ultimate meaning of those facts Christ's teaching discloses. We need faith to accept the Lord's message; we cannot prove its truth by the methods of inquiry useful in the physical and

biological sciences, for the spiritual world is a type of reality which the organs of sense will not reveal. But by living the Christian life, by prayer and communion with God, we can continuously strengthen the faith which is not sight, and become ever more confident that the Lord was in very truth the Light of the World.

II

EVOLUTION AND THE FALL[1]

"God sent His only begotten Son into the world that we might live through Him."—1 JOHN iv. 9.

I FEEL that my subject this afternoon has been chosen for me by popular expectation. You will wish to know what I have to say with regard to the criticisms which I have received in consequence of a sermon preached to the British Association last Sunday.

That sermon, in its acceptance of the biological theory of man's descent from the lower animals, merely affirmed a standpoint which many Christian thinkers of eminence have adopted for a generation past. Increasingly the concept of evolution has dominated the thought not only of men of science but also of theologians. It is now sixty years ago since seven men, of whom six were English clergymen, issued the book called *Essays and Reviews*. In that book Professor Baden Powell praised Darwin's work, and said that "it must soon bring about an entire revolution of opinion in favour of the grand principle of the self-evolving powers of nature." The phrase, of course, needs serious qualification if thus torn from its context—for these "self-evolving powers of nature," as every Christian holds, exist as part of a Divine design and are the expression of the will of the Creator.

[1] A Sermon preached in Westminster Abbey on Sunday, September 5th, 1920.

But though *Essays and Reviews* aroused violent controversy, the type of knowledge which it advocated is now generally accepted. Canon Storr, the learned historian of English theology in the nineteenth century, says, in his discussion of the book: "Past heterodoxy has become present orthodoxy." A generation ago, the brilliant writings of Aubrey Moore,[1] an English clergyman who died all too young, smoothed the way for acceptance by English High Churchmen of the doctrine of evolution. In a sermon published about 1894, Bishop Gore indicated clearly that there was no inherent opposition between Darwin's biological views and the Christian faith. I need not labour my contention that the evolutionary view of the origin of man has established itself firmly in modern thought. It suffices to say that in all the controversy aroused by my sermon during the past week, no Bishop, no distinguished Nonconformist divine, no scholar or man of science of eminence, has—so far as I know—come forward to deny explicitly that man is descended from the lower animals, or to assert that the Fall was an historical event. One man of great spiritual distinction—General Bramwell Booth, of the Salvation Army—has entered the lists against me. I honour his sincerity and courage; but he is the busy leader of a world-wide organisation, a man of action who cannot possibly find time to be a student. Bishops and divines may yet appear to support his views, but I am sure that the verdict alike of modern science and of Christian thought will ultimately be against him.

But, you may fairly say, though Bishops and great divines have not written against your views, they

[1] See his essays, *Science and the Faith* (Kegan Paul, 6th Edition, 1905). The candour of these essays has been variously judged.

have given you no support. Well, I am not surprised —no one likes to have verbal brickbats flung at him, and not a few have come to me during the past week. Many Church leaders, moreover, think that a revolution of religious thought is best made in silence, and there is much to be said for this attitude. I beg you to believe that I dislike my present and, I hope, soon-to-be-forgotten notoriety; that I am really troubled by the distress which my words have given to many Christians of the older generation whose lives might be an example to us all, and whose faith is singularly beautiful, though the background, as it were, against which they set it has become obsolete. But I have for some years been greatly disturbed by the way in which the younger educated men and women of the age are drifting from our churches. The aloofness of the younger men is an old story, and so long as the younger women remained with us the position was not desperate. But our young women are now being well educated. They learn modern science. Those especially who are being trained for the medical profession are taught ideas which assume that the account of the origin of man given at the beginning of the Book of Genesis is untrue. Their study of embryology confirms this teaching. You may remember that Darwin said that the embryological argument was to him " the weightiest of all " in favour of change of species. Such women are among the best of their generation. And they demand, not that the clergy should give them a substitute for Christianity, but that they should unequivocally preach the old Gospel in the light of the new knowledge.

Four years ago the relation of younger women to the Church of England was carefully considered by a

committee which included ladies whose influence in the Church none could dispute. These ladies made exhaustive inquiries, and said (I quote from their report) :

" Want of courage in dealing with present-day problems on the part of the clergy produces, our correspondents consider, an impression of unreality and lack of intellectual honesty, and shows how many clergy fail to realise the mental environment of those whom they address. This has been shown in their dealings with modern Biblical research, upon which few have spoken with any certain voice. A demand is made for definite instruction in the Faith, and for the honest facing of difficult questions in sermons."

Such conclusion has been emphasised by my own constant experience. Let me give, for example, a conversation which has remained in my mind. I was talking at Swanwick to a girl—she will forgive me for mentioning the conversation, for I have forgotten both her name and university—who was very troubled by the question of evolution and her own loss of belief in the early Genesis narratives. I explained to her that I did not accept these remains of primitive thought, and that they were in no way vital to, or even of importance in, Christian belief. She asked me, " But why do you not say so publicly ? " I replied that I had done so repeatedly. She looked at me quietly and asked, " May I say what is in my mind ? " " Please do. We are talking frankly." " Cannot you say it a little more loudly ? It would help so many of us."

Now, I am sure that all in close touch with the younger educated people of our time must recognise the truth of this appeal. We are living at the end of

the most fruitful century of discovery in the history of mankind. The ideas that have been established are of profound importance. They constitute what may without exaggeration be termed a new Renaissance, a re-birth of knowledge. The old framework of ideas which placed Creation six thousand years ago has simply fallen to pieces. Christianity has everything to gain by its new freedom. The new ideas, moreover, are being made accessible in popular form. The origin and development of the world and of man, as science describes the great scheme, is knowledge which no longer needs to be dug out of treatises by experts: it is within the reach of all. Our younger people are impatient of religious teaching which pretends ignorance of, or implies disbelief in, this knowledge.

But the tragedy of the situation is that what is food for the younger generation, some of their elders regard as poison. Of all the letters which I have seen in connection with this controversy during the past week, that which seemed to me most pathetic was one which asked: "What is the parson to do? The country churches nowadays are filled chiefly with the elderly and the aged . . ." The elderly and the aged! What is the outlook for religion? What will happen in a few years, when they have passed away? My friends, religious teachers must preach the Gospel of Christ in the light of the new knowledge. We cannot close our minds or our sermons to the new ideas. The closed mind will lead, sooner or later, to the closed church.

But, it may be objected, why not make the transition smooth by taking the old Genesis stories as allegories, without explicitly denying their truth? I answer

that such a course does not seem to me, and certainly will not be regarded by many of our younger people, as quite honest. There was in the Roman Church at the beginning of the present century a movement called Modernism, which was rightly crushed by Pius X. Its main principle was that a man might accept facts which he knew to be untrue because they had a value for faith. Its exponents therefore claimed to remain in the Roman Church, though they disbelieved in the mass of hagiographical miracles by which that Church is encumbered, because they held that faith in such miracles was of practical value. Such a contention seems to the plain man intolerable. Yet the position is somewhat similar if we say that, though we no longer believe in the Fall as a fact, nevertheless it has a spiritual value. I would rather say that because, through the growth of knowledge, we can no longer believe in the Fall, we will base no religious arguments upon it. Nor is such a course necessary. The story of the Fall is an early attempt to explain the origin of sin, to solve a philosophical problem which baffles us still. Why does man act in opposition to conscience—why does he do what he knows to be wrong? Why should children show this tendency at the very beginning of their conscious lives? Now, the Jews throughout their earlier history showed little aptitude for philosophical speculation. There is more philosophy in the first fourteen verses of St. John's Gospel than in the whole of the Old Testament. Ancient Jewish religious insight was ethical, and their great prophets were prophets of the righteousness of God. So when the writers of Genesis wanted to explain the origin of sin, they took the folk-lore of the Euphrates valley whence Abraham

came, purified it of its polytheism and grossness, and gave us the familiar story.

But if that story is now incredible, if the Fall is a legend, the fact of sin is none the less undoubted. It is the fact of sin that makes the necessity of Redemption. Nothing has surprised me more during the past week than the number of people who seem to think that if there was no Fall there can be no sin in the world. I should have thought that after five years of war, followed by a terrible increase in brutality and lust, no one could have doubted either the existence of sin or the dire need of spiritual regeneration. Let us get this point clear. Whenever a man is disloyal to his conscience, he is disloyal to the Divine Spirit within him. He flouts the will of God. His sins corrupt him. They leave a taint from which he needs to be cleansed, or he will sin more grievously. He needs to be restored in spiritual health, to be made at one with God. He needs to find salvation. And salvation comes through the Divine Spirit, Who is One with the Lord Jesus.

Here in a few words I have put before you what is central in Christian experience. Have we not all felt the power of sin? Have we not struggled for help to conquer temptation? Do we not all know the horrible strength of the animal passions within us, how hard it is to love our enemies or to do good to those who despitefully use us? Have we not all at times been so alienated from God that the words "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God" have seemed the verdict of divine condemnation? And have we not found, in prayer and penitence, in supplication of the Lord Jesus Christ, power once again to follow Him as Master, and a sense of pardon

and forgiveness? This, and not some bit of ancient folklore, is the dynamic of the Christian faith, the source of its enduring claims. In the love of Jesus Christ lies our hope, in that love manifest in His life, poured out with His blood on the Cross. For His love is the love of God, the great guiding principle of the spiritual evolution of humanity. Herein is love, says the writer whom we call St. John, "not that we loved God but that He loved us." "God sent His only begotten Son into the world that we might live through Him." "Hereby know we love because He laid down His life for us."

We are just about to sing Charles Wesley's hymn. There is a tablet to Charles Wesley in this Abbey; and there is also one to Charles Darwin, who was buried here. In the beautiful and famous "Jesu, Lover of my Soul" you will find no mention of the Fall; the whole spirit of the glorious verses is that of Christian Evolution. To Christ we struggle: in Christ we shall find Eternal Life. More than one hundred million years ago primitive forms of living matter appeared upon this earth, and we are the present crown of the process which then began. Through the ages God has been at work, making the animal that should carry within him the power of divine communion; making the soul that after death shall "voyage through strange seas," not alone but with Christ as guide. God has made us for Himself, and restless we are till we rest in Him.

III

THE RISE AND GROWTH OF MAN'S SPIRITUAL CONSCIOUSNESS[1]

RELIGION is a natural product of human nature. It would not exist but for the experiences, needs and aspirations which are characteristic of humanity. It is, in fact, an inevitable result of the structure, powers and working of the human mind. The mind of man is the given thing with which we start. There are differences between individual minds, but, at any rate among the more advanced races of mankind, these differences are relatively small. We all perceive objects in the same sort of way and use the evidence of our senses to make roughly the same picture of the external world. Our minds work similarly; if they did not we should think that others were either childish or mad. What seems reasonable to me seems in general reasonable to my neighbour: we have a common standard of rationality. Our instincts are fundamentally the same: we desire or dislike the same things. Like circumstances, moreover, produce like emotions. Broadly speaking we set our wills in the same direction. Of course, complete uniformity in any of these respects does not exist. Each individual varies from the mean; and even small

[1] From an Address subsequently published as an Essay in *The Inner Life: Essays in Liberal Evangelicalism* (Hodder & Stoughton, 1924).

variations may be so important, or so troublesome, that we fix attention upon them. For example, the journalist, whose success depends upon his skill in appealing to the "average man," knows full well that our minds are built on the same plan. In thought, will and feeling, the three divisions of mental activity, we are fundamentally the same.

Between advanced and primitive races there are considerable mental differences, especially in regard to feeling and power of abstract thought. But it may be said with some confidence that such differences are more due to the general tradition of culture into which children are born than to natural capacity. All living races belong to the same species: they are different varieties of *homo sapiens*. Their brains show the same type of development. The differences between any two normal human brains are quite small compared with the differences which separate either from the most advanced of the anthropoid apes. Likenesses there undoubtedly are between our minds and the mental processes of higher mammalia; but our knowledge of the brain and of the significance of its different regions warrants the conclusion that the animals do not think, act or feel as we do. The human mind is unique upon the earth. Because it is what it is, religion has come into existence. Man is the religious animal.

How did religion begin? The Christian would say that God implanted in primitive man the germ of spiritual understanding. The man of science, on the other hand, describes an apparently "natural" development. We will first indicate the sort of description which science gives. Later we will advance reasons for holding that the Christian and scientific

standpoints form a fundamental unity. Apparently, in the Reindeer Age of France, Palæolithic man, hunter and fire-maker, buried his dead in expectation of a future life. His "sculptures testify to funeral rites and to a true worship of the dead." This would indicate that, at least some 50,000 years ago, men existed who had made vague speculations as to the ultimate meaning of human life. We may perhaps say that the feeling that the Universe is not hostile to the individual and his tribal group—a feeling with which such speculations would be immediately associated—is the basis of religion. Primitive man, when he began to think, found himself in a social group surrounded by danger, hardship and death. Yet his surroundings made life possible. He was one with, and to an unequalled degree master of, Nature. The world, as he saw it, was not such a bad place. There was a Friendliness around, if his community could only enlist its aid. But how could this object be achieved? Certain acts became associated with the idea of success. Some we should consider rational, as they strengthened tribal organisation. Others were irrational, created by fancy out of pure chance. Some resulted from the personification of dreaded forces, which it was desired to placate. Thus arose taboo and sacrifice. Gifts to the god are natural: equally natural are social restraints, marriage prohibitions, rules of cleanliness, with their fanciful developments and distortions which are thought to please him.[1]

[1] The above brief statement is necessarily inadequate. Widely differing views as to the nature and origin of primitive religion are held by experts. Probably religious cults arose from social acts rather than from individual speculations. Such acts influenced religious theory and were only partially determined by it. A short statement of current opinion, with numerous references, will be found at the beginning of Chapter XII of J. B.

Alike to savage and to civilised man, the most inexplicable of natural processes are those connected with reproduction. The fertility of cattle and of other animals used as food, the plenteousness of harvests, continue to be of outstanding importance to human welfare. Among savage or half-civilised peoples, where medicine is undeveloped and both accidents and warfare are common, human fecundity is highly prized. Hence we naturally find that religion in such peoples is associated with Nature's generative forces. Goddesses of fertility are characteristic of a certain stage of religious development; and often their worship has been associated with gross and repulsive practices.

All the religions which we can now observe, or of which we have written records, appear to have been shaped since men learned to sow corn and to domesticate animals. They are, as the anthropologists would say, the religions of Neolithic or of modern man.[1] Now man only reached the Neolithic stage of development in Western Europe some 10,000 years ago; and, although the same stage may have been reached earlier elsewhere, notably in Egypt, Mesopotamia and Russian Turkestan, it seems certain that the antiquity of the forms of human religion with which we are

Pratt's *The Religious Consciousness* (Macmillan, 1921). Professor Pratt defines religion as "the serious and social attitude of individuals or communities toward the power or powers which they conceive as having ultimate control over their interests and destinies." Professor A. S. Peake, in *Christianity, Its Nature and Truth* (Duckworth, 1908), suggests that religion is essentially "fellowship with the Unseen." Otto, in *The Idea of the Holy* (Oxford University Press, 1923), thinks that religion arises from awareness of a terrible and awful unknown.

[1] Possibly an exception should be made of the Australian aborigines. Many hold that, when first discovered, they were still in the late Palæolithic stage of development. They had, however, domesticated the dog.

acquainted is extremely brief compared with that of man. Man, the reader may be reminded, emerged from a generalised ape-like stock about a million years ago.[1] In view of the wide differences which separate the highest from the lowest of existing religions, we may conclude that the religious development of humanity during recent millennia has been rapid. The fact of man's spiritual progress is sometimes denied by those who proclaim that "human nature does not change." Their pessimism is rooted in ignorance.

Such rapid change is, in a sense, artificial. Our primary instincts, inherited from our animal ancestry, remain strong. The impulses which make for self-preservation and race-preservation, together with such mental traits as the herd-instinct and the fear of darkness, have come down through millions of years.[2] Man's distinctive evolution seems to have been predominantly due to his acquisition of the power of

[1] An admirable discussion of the antiquity of man, and of the evidence on which modern views are based, will be found in *Fossil Men*, by Marcellin Boule, English translation by J. E. and J. Ritchie (Oliver and Boyd, 1923). The general reader will appreciate the numerous illustrations by which the volume is enriched. A necessarily tentative reconstruction of the pre-history of Europe is contained in *The Cambridge Ancient History*, Vol. I (Cambridge University Press, 1923). The introductory chapter by Professor Myres gives a graphic account of the way in which geological and climatic changes affected the fortunes of the human beings who lived in or near Europe long before the dawn of Egyptian civilisation.

[2] W. H. R. Rivers in his book *Instinct and the Unconscious* (Cambridge University Press, 1920) suggests that in man "the unconscious is a storehouse of experience associated with instinctive reactions." An extreme example of his theory may be given. There is reason to believe that man, like all mammals, passed through an amphibian phase in his evolution. But the amphibian must have a mind adapted to two very different kinds of existence, in water and on land respectively. Rivers suggests that this fact may explain the occasional appearance in humanity of "splitting of consciousness."

speech. This led to the development of the higher brain-centres.[1] Man needed to convey to his fellows not merely primitive human emotions and commands, but reasons and ultimately abstract ideas; and the human brain was gradually fashioned in response to this need. Yet it was not until the beginning of writing, apparently some seven or eight thousand years ago,[2] that man could gather up and store his mental triumphs. Oral tradition does not safely preserve the discoveries or aspirations of the mind. But writing keeps the best intact and furnishes an instrument by which that best may be made the basis of still further advances. We shall later consider the religious interpretation of the "natural" process of human development which science describes. Our primary concern is to indicate concisely the facts of human evolution. When the scheme which men of science put before us has been outlined, we can seek to explain it. We shall then claim that human progress must be the result of a divine purpose, that man's spiritual consciousness is a divine gift. For the present we view the rise of religion as a fact of anthropological investigation. From this standpoint

[1] Perhaps it would be better to say that the development of speech and of the higher brain-centres proceeded simultaneously. Physiologists divide different regions of the cortex of the brain into two groups: the "sensory-motor regions" and "association areas." The latter are intellectual centres. "The anterior portions of the frontal lobes of the brain are indispensable to the intellectual life." In the lower mammals they are almost non-existent. They are more important in the apes, and we can trace their marked development through Neanderthal to civilised man. "Neanderthal man had only the most rudimentary articulate language." He flourished in the Mid-Pleistocene geological period and apparently belonged to a species of man which is now extinct.

[2] These figures may quite possibly be increased as a result of archæological discoveries, especially such as may be made in Central Asia.

we may say that speech first made religion possible, but that writing has been the main factor in its purification and enrichment.

Our instincts are our own: they are born with us. But it is very doubtful if our thoughts are really our own. Certain mental tendencies appear to be inherited. Hence, if the opportunity is favourable, primitive superstitions will reassert themselves with disquieting vitality. Different races, moreover, have not only different physical characters but different mental constitutions. Hence Christianity among a pure Nordic race like the Scandinavian differs markedly from the form which it takes among the relatively pure Iberians of Southern Italy. But the actual ideas which we hold, religious and social and intellectual, we get from our fellows. They are not our own: they are given to us by "suggestion"[1] or education. Most men, an anthropologist will say with gloomy truth, do not think for themselves: they react to what they receive from others. Their minds are not creative but receptive. They are sorting machines, as it were, which take or reject what is more or less congenial. Hence habit and custom are immensely powerful for good or ill. When different races with different traditions of life and thought mix, the immediate result is usually harmful. The individual is surrounded by an atmosphere of moral and spiritual

[1] "Suggestion" is, broadly speaking, the process "whereby one mind acts upon another unwittingly." Sometimes it is used merely to denote "the cognitive aspect of the herd-instinct." Thus W. McDougall, *Social Psychology* (16th edition, Methuen, 1921), defines it as "a process of communication resulting in the acceptance with conviction of the communicated proposition in the absence of logically adequate grounds for its acceptance." An illuminating discussion of suggestion will be found in W. Trotter, *Instincts of the Herd in Peace and War* (2nd edition, Unwin, 1919).

conflict ; and unless, as we say, he is exceptional in character, he degenerates.

In spite of all these facts the human race has thrown up a sufficient number of men of creative genius to make rapid progress, intellectual and spiritual, since the discovery of writing. Descriptive science does not, and indeed cannot, explain the origin of creative genius. As we shall argue later, the Christian doctrine of the Holy Spirit is necessary to interpret the whole process of human development. It suffices now to say that men of genius, of creative power, do actually appear. They are relatively few in number. But there are many others who, though their minds are not creative, can appreciate genius and will seize upon and hold to its achievements. Though the large remainder in any nation follow slowly and reluctantly, they are, under favourable circumstances, dragged upward. Thus human progress, intellectual, moral and spiritual, is a fact. There have been periods of decay, especially when good stocks have been exhausted by war or wealth. But, on the whole, the advance of humanity has been definite and fairly rapid since the discovery of writing laid the foundation of modern civilisation.

In religion especially we can trace such progress. Primitive religions, as we have indicated, were largely irrational and seldom moral. When men personified natural forces and sought to placate the hostility or to win the favour of their resulting deities, moral ideas had no place in religion. When the conception of a tribal god was reached, the welfare of the tribe was thought to be his special interest. Social acts which weakened tribal cohesion were therefore condemned by religious authority. But in the primitive moral

code there were no universal standards of right and wrong; towards hostile tribes the god prescribed ruthless vengeance. In the earliest records of the Old Testament we can perceive this stage of morality. Jehovah was the God of Israel: Baal was a god of their Canaanite enemies. The grossness of the Canaanite nature-cults was an abomination to the more morally-decent Hebrews. Differences of worship inflamed national antipathies. But the Hebrews themselves did not begin to outgrow the thought of Jehovah as a God of vengeance until Amos arose. That great prophet and his successors took Hebrew religion and made it truly moral. "I will have mercy and not sacrifice" was their especially characteristic teaching. Owing to the strength of religious conservatism the Temple sacrifices were retained until the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. But centuries earlier prophetic teaching evolved the synagogue. In our Lord's time the Temple and its ritual were really an anachronism. When the prophets had advanced to the conception of One God, righteous and demanding righteousness, Lord of the whole earth, they had virtually decreed the suppression of animal sacrifices and central shrines. "Neither in this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, shall ye worship the Father. The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth" (St. John iv. 21, 23). It was thus given to the Hebrew race to make a religious advance unequalled in any independent development of human history. Polytheism was replaced by Monotheism. Superstition and sacrifice —to say nothing of religious immorality—lost their *raison d'être* as men grew to understand the true nature of God and His demands upon men. The

Hebrew prophets prepared the way for Christ. Jesus stands at the apex of Hebrew religious progress as He proclaimed the love of God, laid down the principles by which men might gain communion with the Father, showed in His own death the redemptive power of innocent suffering and gave to humanity the reality no less than the appearance of God Incarnate upon earth.

Many Christians resent the description of the development of human nature which we owe to modern investigation. They say truly that it cannot be harmonised with the Catholic doctrine of the origin of sin, which was fashioned by St. Augustine on the basis of speculations accepted by St. Paul. Nevertheless modern discovery must be accepted. It must be used in religious reconstruction for the simple reason that it gives us facts which, though unexpected by our forefathers, are true. Man had an animal origin. He has evolved from an ape-like stock. He has gradually acquired religious understanding. His spiritual growth is a part of the great evolutionary progress which has led to human civilisation. Obviously all races have not reached the same stage of progress. There are between races, as between individuals, marked differences. But the main direction of development is clear. In becoming human the non-religious animal acquired or received the religious sense through which he is gaining or has gained more adequate conceptions of God. We cannot say that civilisation has made religion, any more than we can say that religion has made civilisation : each is a result of the actual historical development of the human mind. Man, trying to conquer his environment and to fit it to his needs, has acquired knowledge.

He has learned, and is still learning, both how to use the processes of nature and how to act so as to make the best of his social life. As individual understanding has been quickened by the growth of social organisation, man has gradually been led to realise that goodness and truth are of paramount importance in human life. He has won the knowledge that these qualities are spiritual principles to which he must be loyal. Man's control over the forces of Nature and over lower forms of life has steadily increased. As his ascendancy has become more marked, he has found it ever more necessary rightly to adjust his relations to other men. This necessity has driven him to consider the meaning and purpose of human life. He is thus being forced to conclude that Goodness, Beauty and Truth express the inner spiritual meaning of the Universe. They are attributes of God, the Creative Mind by whom the whole Universe has been made. In other words, they are " absolute values." The whole process of human evolution is a divinely-planned design by which man has been led to this kind of spiritual understanding. As man has thus developed, his sense of right and wrong has become more true : his conscience has become more enlightened and more sensitive. Yet instincts and passions inherited from the distant past continue to set themselves in opposition to his more recently acquired spiritual insight. There is disharmony within him, a state of war in which defeat means sin. The flesh lusteth against the spirit. In the conflict conscience cannot be silenced, for the desire to know and serve God acquires added strength from all reflection upon human experience and conditions. Biologists reveal a sort of blind upward urge as they describe the slow sequence of

change which led from primitive organisms to the higher mammals. Man has become conscious of this urge and its direction. Hence he feels that he must not fall below the level which he has reached: he must struggle up to higher levels. For this purpose he was made. God has prescribed the struggle, which is so fundamental that it explains the meaning of human life. Human life must have a meaning in the eternal scheme of things. No adequate explanation of the riddle of human existence can be given unless we accept Christ's teaching that success in moral and spiritual conflict fits man for the realm of eternal values, makes him a member of the Kingdom of God. Moral apathy and spiritual inertia constitute a refusal to take the path which God has ordained. If the Universe is rational the spirit of the individual must be harmed by lack of response to God's will. "The wages of sin is death."

Such is the way in which, in the light of recent knowledge, we think of sin and its consequences. It is well to bring out the differences between this conception and the Augustinian theory embedded in Catholic theology.[1] The latter theory was based on

[1] The background of the Augustinian theory of the origin of sin is discussed in great detail in F. R. Tennant's valuable treatise, *Sources of the Doctrine of the Fall and Original Sin* (Cambridge University Press, 1903). The connection of St. Paul's thought with earlier and contemporary Jewish speculation is traced in this book. It is a striking fact that the use which St. Paul made of "the Fall" is not to be found anywhere in the Old Testament. Dr. Tennant, in his Hulsean Lectures, *The Origin and Propagation of Sin* (2nd edition, Cambridge University Press, 1906), gives a careful analysis and criticism of beliefs now abandoned in consequence of our modern knowledge of man's animal origin. His constructive work in this volume has been deservedly of wide influence. Various refinements of the doctrine of Original Sin were put forward from time to time. The Roman Catholic theory formulated at the Council of Trent was, like other contemporary

St. Paul's use of the folk-story of Adam and Eve. It assumed that "in the beginning" God directly created a pair of human beings. He gave to them immortality so long as they did not eat the fruit of the tree of knowledge. Adam disobeyed the command not to eat the fruit of this tree and was punished by sentence of death. Through his sin death came into the world: men and animals for the first time became mortal. In order, however, that God's act of creation might not be undone by death, He gave to Adam and Eve the power of procreation. Sex was thus the consequence of sin. The begetting of children involved the sin of concupiscence. Thus children are literally born in sin. From the act which calls them into being they receive a physical taint. Thus Original Sin has been handed on from generation to generation and the whole world is corrupt.

We have stated the Augustinian doctrine of the origin of sin in its bare crudity. Needless to say there is no trace of it in Christ's teaching. St. Paul is not responsible for its more repellent features,[1] though he apparently took from the popular theology of his time the idea of using Adam's "Fall" to explain the origin of sin and death. St. Augustine's fully-developed theory is horrible, for it casts a slur on marriage—God's plan of continuing the human race. For this reason the older Evangelical teaching in the English Church normally repudiated its extravagances. The phrase "born in sin" of the Catechism was rightly held to imply merely that a child at its birth acquired

statements, "pledged to the anthropology and modes of exegesis which modern research has rendered obsolete and it is . . . incapable of adjustment to evolutionary views of the origin of human nature."

[1] The *loci classici* for St. Paul's teaching on the subject are 1 Cor. xv. 21, 22 and Rom. v. 12–21.

the sinful tendencies of human nature. Sex, of course, can be made an instrument of degradation. But it enters into the finest of human emotions ; and, rightly used, sex-instincts have a rich and fruitful influence in the development of human personality. *Corruptio optimi pessima :* the worst elements in human nature arise from the corruption of the best. Christians will cease to fear the psychological teaching that religious devotion derives strength from the sublimation[1] of sex-instincts when they have consigned to oblivion St. Augustine's theory of the propagation of sin. There is a prevalent disposition to ignore or belittle the change in our views which has resulted from rejection of the story of Adam and Eve. So some Christian teachers, who know full well that sin and death did not arise as a result of eating the fruit of the tree of knowledge, continue to use the term " Fall " symbolically. It is more honest to admit that our ideas have been radically changed by modern science and scholarship. By the change our understanding of man's relation to God's plan has been purified.

Many shrink from bold re-statement because they have been taught that " the Fall " and atonement through Christ are intimately connected. That St. Paul joined them together in his own thought is undoubted. But all that is of value in St. Paul's teaching with regard to redemption from sin is quite independent of any theory of the way in which sin came into the world. Sin is, as he taught, rebellion against God. It alienates man from his Maker. We feel the need of aid to make us at one with God. We can get that aid from Christ. He is the living Power

[1] A description of sublimation appears later in the present essay. See pp. 39, 40.

who can redeem us. This is the primary fact of Christian experience.

To understand this fact we must consider the influence of God in human life. In other words, we must examine the doctrine of the Holy Spirit; and, the examination completed, we must relate that doctrine to the Incarnation.

Man's evolution, as modern science presents it to us, seems at first sight a wholly "natural" process. Given primitive organisms and their surroundings, "natural selection" seems to be, if adequate, a purely mechanical explanation of the origin of species.[1] Modern biologists teach that living things have an innate capacity for variation. Changes in their structure and organisation continually occur. Some of these, at all events, can be inherited and, when

[1] It would be out of place to examine the differences of opinion with regard to the machinery of evolution which exist among biological experts. But, because a base type of religious propaganda uses such differences to cast doubt on the fact of evolution, a short statement may be made. It is undeniable that in all animals offspring tend to differ from their parents. Variations thus arise. Moreover, in the struggle for existence those individuals of any species survive which are best fitted to overcome the dangers to which they are exposed. Valuable variations are thus preserved. Nature weeds out the unfit. This is Darwin's "natural selection." It is a process which gradually piles up differences of bodily structure and organisation till different species are evolved. No competent biologist now denies Darwin's conclusion that by some such process all existing species have been derived from primitive forms of life. But we have no knowledge of the reason why variations arise and there is great uncertainty as to how they are preserved. Darwin believed that the differences which exist between members of a litter are inheritable. This seems to be untrue. And many biologists accept Lamarck's view that variations are preserved because the use or disuse of an organ of the body, which strengthens or weakens its efficiency, "ultimately affects the germ-cells and so produces changes which are inherited." For general readers a small hand-book by E. W. MacBride, *Zoology* (Jack, 1922), may be commended. The wider aspects of evolutionary theory are discussed in J. Arthur Thomson's Gifford Lectures, *The System of Animate Nature* (2 vols., Williams & Norgate, 1920).

inherited, serve as a sort of basis of further change. Among new types which thus arise, such as are fit to survive do survive though their " fitness " may be as repulsive as that of a tape-worm. So species have been evolved and man has been made. In particular we may conjecture that man's power of speech arose, as the naturalist would say, " fortuitously," and was preserved because it gave him a better chance in life's struggle. But the better the brain the more effective is speech. So brain-development continued naturally because it had survival-value. Thus man was gradually enabled to discover writing and so to integrate his mental progress. In this way we can construct a quasi-mechanical theory of evolution in which civilisation, and the religious understanding which has developed with it and within it, appear to be the automatic result of the fact that primitive organisms with their potentialities came into existence upon the earth. We may perhaps go further and say that if our knowledge were sufficient we should even understand the machinery by which the earliest living matter came into existence. But does such knowledge of machinery really supply a sufficient explanation of man's existence and powers ? Surely not. We cannot explain the higher by the lower. Man is more than an orderly arrangement of molecules resulting from blind mechanism. We must postulate that, as far back as thought can go, when the matter of which the earth is built was an infinitesimal part of some gigantic nebula, man with all his potentialities and powers existed in the mind of God. The subsequent creation of the earth was intended to serve a purpose. That purpose has been disclosed in the subsequent development of the system of animate nature. The development, though

apparently fortuitous, has been really directed. For *creative activity has been at work.* Life, mind as we see it in animals, man's spiritual consciousness—these have been produced: we cannot assume that they were implicit in the primordial matter of the solar system. We are forced to the conclusion that the whole evolutionary process, leading to man's civilised progress as its culmination, is the result of God's continuous action. His purpose and creative power have been ever present. The lower creation He seems to have moulded from without. But man, who has gained spiritual understanding, God also moulds from within. He has given to us—for that is what we mean when we say we have gained—capacity to understand His nature, to respond to His guidance. He has made us for communion with His Spirit, and in so far as we make ourselves fit for such communion we gain it. The doctrine of the Holy Spirit is the doctrine that the Creator is also immanent in His creation. God is not only an external ruler but an indwelling spirit. He gives us Himself so far as we are able and willing to receive Him. Experience tells us that, though we are constrained by heredity and environment, we have a certain measure of freedom. If we misuse it, as in sensuality and selfishness, we lessen our capacity of response to the Spirit of God. Sin is alienation from Him.

What place does Christ occupy in this scheme? We believe that, in Jesus, God was as completely manifested as was possible under human limitations. Our Lord was Very Man, with a truly human mind. But He was also Very God, showing His Deity in His humanly-perfect revelation of spiritual reality and in His complete loyalty to the Father's Will. These conclusions are bound up with the experience, discovery,

conviction—call it what you will—on which the Christian doctrine of the Trinity is based: that the guidance which the Spirit of God gives to men cannot be opposed to, or separated from, the still living influence of Jesus, the Christ. The progressive revelation of spiritual truth which is an essential element of the divinely-guided evolution of humanity is one with the revelation which came in and through Jesus. So far as we take the personal influence of Christ into our lives, we are enabled to ascend in heart, mind and spirit to the Father. Christ draws us to God and, by this very action, gives us strength to overcome evil, redeems us from sin. But the divine Christ and the Divine Spirit are not two Gods, two separate centres of consciousness, though many popular hymns and some modern theologians countenance this heresy. Christ's teaching, Christ's example, Christ's still living power belong to the one spiritual Source from which humane agnostics derive their idealism. From that Source come flashes of insight to the mystic. From that Source comes also the power of "sublimation" which works the miraculous change of personality investigated by psychologists. There is a true and complete unity in the Godhead. The Word made Flesh in Christ Jesus was not a Personality separate from God. He did not give His life to ransom men from the devil, as crude mediæval theology taught; nor was it necessary that He should offer Himself to placate a justly angry Father, as more recent theories suggest.[1] In Jesus we have a revelation of God as complete and full as our

[1] "The theory which converted the death of Christ into a ransom paid to the devil was generally accepted for nearly a thousand years." So says Dr. Hastings Rashdall in his Bampton Lectures, *The Idea of Atonement in Christian Theology*, pp. 349 f. (Macmillan, 1919). In this book, which is remarkable alike for its learning

nature allows us to receive. It is in no way contrary to, but it far surpassed, the revelation conveyed in the gradual illumination of humanity by the Holy Spirit. Our Lord was most beautiful in character, supreme in spiritual insight, unsurpassed in moral strength. He exemplified the ideal man, as that ideal exists in the thought of God. So for humanity He is both a standard of perfection and an inspiration. If we receive the direction of the Holy Spirit aright, we are led to Christ. But while the Incarnation is the central fact of Christianity, the doctrine of the Cross is its most distinctive contribution to human religion. They who serve God must expect to suffer in His service. The reward of righteousness is not happiness on earth but eternal life, begun here imperfectly in partial fellowship with God and fully developed after death. Human sin is essentially destructive. It brings suffering to men who try to serve God, just as it made God, Incarnate on earth, endure the torture of Crucifixion. Not evil in Jesus, but the common sin of mankind, drove the Saviour to the agony of the Cross. Christ did not suffer because God was angry, but because men were evil. He gave His life to ransom men from self-centred indifference to those sins which do not immediately harm themselves, from complacent self-righteousness, from the spiritual inertia which is the curse of institutional religion. Who, remembering the influence of the Saviour's example, will say that the ransom has not been given " for many " ? The Cross has been, and remains, the great incentive to a divine recklessness which in our own time has sent a Schweitzer

and its philosophic insight, the reader will find clear and incisive criticism of those " substitutionary " theories of the atonement which are still sometimes maintained.

to the Congo and many a " pacifist " to prison. The wider significance of the Cross is connected with its witness to the truth that in all the afflictions of His people, God is afflicted.[1]

The teaching of the Cross has spread far outside the confines of the visible Church. One of the most tragic facts of history is that the visible Church has repeatedly been disloyal to the Gospel of Christ and has made martyrs of men who, inspired by the Gospel, gained steadfastness from their knowledge that they were suffering like Jesus. Against falsehood and unrighteousness, ecclesiastical as well as civil, the power of the Cross has prevailed. The martyr's body has been destroyed only to liberate the spirit. As men die in Christ they reign with Him on earth. Their names may be forgotten, but their influence survives. They are ministers of the atonement, for they help other men to win communion with God. Abelard[2] seized upon the vital principle of the atonement when with rich simplicity he said : " I think that the purpose and cause of the Incarnation were that God might illuminate the world by the light of His wisdom and excite it to the love of Himself."

How is forgiveness of sin connected with the great experiences of religious life ? How is it related to repentance, conversion and peace ? Abelard gave the true answer : God forgives sin by making the sinner better. " Forgiveness of sin," says Dr. Charles, " is the restoration of the repentant soul to communion with God." Repentance involves conversion. It is

[1] Dr. R. H. Charles has pointed out to me that this idea cannot be found in the true text of Isaiah lxiii. 9. It is, however, implicit in the teaching of Jeremiah.

[2] For a brief account of the teaching of Abelard and the original Latin of the passage quoted, see Rashdall, *op. cit.*, pp. 357–364.

a change of mind which gives a new direction to thought and will. When there is true repentance for sin the whole mind turns in a new direction. The primary instincts remain: they continue to be temptations to evil. But the controlling forces become purer and stronger. There arises a truer sense of life's values and duties, of what is worth doing and of what we ought to do. The man sees more clearly the hill which he must climb in obedience to the law of his being. He gets strength for the effort. The sense of power establishes trust in God and gives religious "peace." But such peace is not inertia after conflict; it is the satisfaction which victory gives because it promises further victory in an unending struggle. The promise is not illusory, for right conduct makes further right conduct easier. When a man's energy has once been turned into a channel leading to higher ideals, a less severe effort is needed to make it again flow in that channel. The man is "a better man."

The phenomena of conversion acquire a new significance in the light of modern psychological teaching with regard to "sublimation" and "the unconscious mind."[1] The psychologists point out that "childhood is one long conflict between individual instinctive

[1] An admirably lucid account of the theories, built by modern psychologists upon the concepts of "repression" and "complexes," will be found in a small book by Bernard Hart, *The Psychology of Insanity* (Cambridge University Press, 1920). Dr. Hart describes a complex as "a system of emotionally toned ideas," "a cause which determines the behaviour of the conscious stream," "not constantly active but becoming so under certain conditions." "A complex may exert a profound effect upon consciousness, although the individual himself may be unaware of its action." Dr. Hart's definition is regarded by some writers as unduly wide. Rivers, in his *Instinct and the Unconscious*, previously cited, suggests that a complex should be used for "any body of suppressed tendencies and experience which shows any form of independent activity." Such independent activity is the

tendencies and the social ideals and traditions of the community into which the child is born." The conflict continues into adult life and is often especially intense when the sex-instincts develop. Now it is possible to banish from consciousness painful experiences associated with instinctive tendencies which are out of harmony with the needs of social life. But such repression is a dangerous process. Whenever unpleasant experience passes from consciousness, with or without an effort of will, an unhealthy mental state may be produced. The apparent peace of mind, which results from "forgetting," may be deceptive. Suppressed experience is often active below the threshold of consciousness. It may give rise to mental processes in the unconscious mind and so form morbid "complexes." Ultimately these complexes may show their effects in mental (rational or moral) disease. Thus the harmfulness of barren asceticism is repeatedly disclosed in the horrible visions of hagiography. The alternative to suppression is sublimation. When we educate a child we do not suppress his self-regarding instincts; we turn them into altruistic channels. For instance, a girl may remain in the centre of her own scheme. But if she be led to see herself as a lady bountiful, the energy arising out of conflict between selfishness and nursery discipline will gradually find expression in kindly service. The self-regarding instinct is thus sublimated. Similar transformations take place in adult life. Their effect is so remarkable that it is

essential element in the morbid process of dissociation or "splitting" of consciousness. The terms "suppression" and "repression" are variously used by writers on the unconscious. Rivers uses "suppression" to denote the general process by which experience becomes unconscious, and limits "repression" to the witting endeavour of the individual to effect this result.

natural to use St. Paul's phraseology: "Ye have put off the old man with his doings, and have put on the new man, which is being renewed unto knowledge after the image of Him that created him" (Col. iii. 9, 10) Using the language of psychology, sublimation is the process, in which, as Rivers[1] said, "the energy arising out of conflict is diverted from some channel which leads in an asocial or anti-social direction, and turned into one leading to an end connected with the higher ideals of society." The reader will notice how exactly St. Paul expresses, in theological language, the change which modern psychological experts observe and describe.

Conversion, when it is apparently instantaneous, is the sudden recognition of the possibility of sublimation. Though the change may be unexpected by the man in whom it takes place, it is probably always the result of a long-continued series of influences. Of some of these we may be conscious, as we argue with ourselves and struggle for self-mastery. Others are embedded in the unconscious strata of the mind. They may be due to early training, to forgotten experiences and aspirations which are at length ready to bear fruit. Just as a super-saturated solution of some salt suddenly crystallises, so the contents of the mind are re-arranged. The energy of conflict passes along a new channel: there is victory and that sense of rightly-directed power which is religious peace.

Many Christians will say that, by such explanation, the greatest event of the religious life of man is reduced to a merely "natural" phenomenon. What part does the Holy Spirit play in the change? Those who ask such a question really contend for a dualism between

[1] Rivers, *op. cit.*, p. 156.

" natural " and " supernatural " which cannot be maintained. We must insist that " Nature " is the realm in which, and through which, spiritual activity is manifested. It is the mechanism which God has designed and uses for his spiritual ends. God works upon man by creating his environment just as certainly as if He gave him direct commands. What are " the higher ideals of society " to which sublimation directs a man's energy but " the Kingdom of God and His righteousness " which Christ bade us seek ? Human evolution is the process by which man has been led to realise his moral duty and spiritual capacity. Its most characteristic feature is God's slow revelation of the Kingdom which we must try to enter. And sublimation shows that man can attain the end for which he was designed. The atavistic instincts of self and sex appear, to a superficial observer, fundamentally hostile to spiritual perfection. But in sublimation they are transformed into sources of spiritually rich energy. The doctrine of sublimation is, in fact, the scientific formulation of the principle that, if a man will seek to do the will of God, he shall find that God has created within him the natural powers which he needs.

The Christian doctrine of sin and conversion, depending as it does on the facts of common experience, is psychologically sound in essentials. We must prune away mythological teaching as to the origin of sin. Also we must recognise, more clearly than our forefathers, that the conscience of man is a gradual development in humanity. Until Christ came it was relative to the general level of human civilisation ; and even His absolute standards are perceived to have an increasingly richer content as man's spiritual understanding develops.

We accept the historic fact of human spiritual development. We allow that man's conscience has been gradually created: it is still in the making. But we strongly repudiate the conclusion, which some would draw, that sin is of little importance because it is mere disloyalty to an artificial code which varies with time and circumstance. As against such teaching we insist that we must account for what we have received. God has fashioned us by making the civilisation, into which we are born, act upon our inherited instincts and powers. He has thus made us what we are: has taught us the moral law. If we are disloyal to the conscience which He has thus created we are disloyal to Him. To fall below the level on which we find ourselves is to be false to the purpose of our creation. That we can see, somewhat vaguely, how conscience has been built up neither disproves its existence nor delivers us from its obligations. It is doubtless true that if man had not developed the faculty of speech and acquired the art of writing, his moral sense would be rudimentary and his spiritual insight non-existent. Man, in fact, would not be man but an anthropoid. It is equally true that, if Jesus had never been born, Christianity would not exist. But the Divine ordering of the Universe has been such that we have the guidance both of conscience and of Christ. Through heredity and environment we are what we are; and by what we are God will judge us. The inner light with its witness to Christ must then be obeyed. Failure to obey it is, as Jesus said in His supremely suggestive parable, failure to make use of the talents with which we have been entrusted. Such failure deserves and receives Divine punishment. Spiritual apostasy is an affront to the Maker of man. It is right that we should recognise that God only

demands from each individual a response proportionate to his spiritual endowment. This truth Jesus plainly taught. Our Father in Heaven is a just judge. From "the heir of all the ages," born of a good stock and soundly educated in clean and healthy surroundings, more will be expected than from a man brought up in the vice and misery of a slum. But no such considerations invalidate the old teaching, "If we say that we have no sin we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John i. 8, 9).

Repentance and forgiveness have a cleansing power. But when St. John speaks of our being cleansed from *all* unrighteousness he is thinking of the final end of the soul's journey to Eternal Life. No conversion makes a man miraculously perfect. Temptations continue to come; and every man, who is honest in self-examination, knows that he often fails to be true to his highest aspirations. Growth in grace is a slow and painful process. So intimate are the ties that bind us in social life to other men that, almost in spite of ourselves, we share many of the common sins of our civilisation. The greatest saints of Christian history have lamented their "exceeding sinfulness." To many on a lower spiritual level their language seems extravagant. But the higher we rise, the more distant seems the western horizon, where, in the glow of sunset, the Kingdom of Heaven lies. The human race has still far to travel, and God alone knows how its earthly journey will end. But the individual, who marches in the ranks for some three-score years and ten, has his short-lived duty. Sin and struggle and suffering are its burdens; but love and joy and peace are its reward. Life here ends in

death; but Life Eternal with Christ shall be given to those who have made themselves fit to receive it through their service to God. Do we thus make ourselves fit by our own strength? No. The true answer to such questioning was given by St. Paul: "I live: and yet no longer I, but Christ liveth in me" (Gal. ii, 20). Christianity endures because of the power of Christ to raise men to fellowship with Himself.

IV

TOLERATION AND CHRISTIAN UNITY[1]

MANY doubtless heard with some surprise that it was proposed to commemorate the Mayflower Tercentenary in this Abbey Church. Here, it might rightly be said, the stately tradition of English Churchmanship continues. Save for the brief interval of the Commonwealth, our past is associated not with Puritan sectaries (to use an old and to me hateful word), but with Anglican ecclesiastics and divines. The Pilgrim fathers of the *Mayflower* typified a stern and sturdy opposition to the form of Christian worship established in this land. As we think of them we think of repressive legislation against schismatics, of Acts of Uniformity, of Bunyan imprisoned in Bedford Jail writing his immortal *Pilgrim's Progress*. We recall the bitterness of religious strife in the seventeenth century, the harsh laws which drove many of our most conscientious and serious-minded fellow-citizens to found beyond the seas colonies where they might in freedom worship God in their own way.

Yes, it is all true. And, because it is true, the more reason is there that we should have a commemoration service here at the present time. For, in holding such a service, we acknowledge that the persecution of the Puritans by the early Stuarts was

[1] A Mayflower Tercentenary Address in Westminster Abbey on Sunday, September 12th, 1920.

wrong; that the post-Reformation intolerance of statesmen and clergy was wrong. We affirm our conviction that complete religious toleration is a wise principle of statesmanship: it is, as I hold, the only avenue to Christian unity.

Westminster Abbey, moreover, can ignore no great event in Anglo-Saxon history. Our dead rest here in mute protest against exclusiveness. Here sleep Cardinals and Puritans. Here lie Mary Tudor and imperious Elizabeth; Margaret Beaufort, patroness of learning and Cromwell's daughter. Here lay the great Protector himself till in "mean revenge" his corpse was disinterred. Here are buried High Church and Low Church divines. Here is a tablet to John Wesley and a memorial to the great Nonconformist hymn-writer, Isaac Watts. Here we cannot renew old disputes or continue ancient animosities. In church there must be forgiveness and peace; and our monuments combine to remind us that Westminster Abbey is the parish church of the Anglo-Saxon peoples.

It may, however, be justly said that the blame for seventeenth-century religious intolerance must be assigned to the spirit of the age rather than to the English Church. Some of the Puritans who settled in New England showed, when they were in power, no little severity to those whose religious opinions they disliked. Lord Acton, the greatest and probably the most impartial English historian of the last generation, affirms that the Puritan sects "were the bitterest enemies of the toleration they demanded." The Puritan emigrants in America, he continues, "recorded with greater severity the penal laws of the Mother country." Religious earnestness, in fact, at that time

showed itself in a deplorable fanaticism; and there was a general belief that, if a man would not renounce views regarded as erroneous, he should be treated as a malefactor. The religious struggles that followed the Reformation had made men hard and bitter. Political quarrels were intensified by religious hatred. Whenever Rome was in power her agents were vigilant and not seldom merciless. The intolerant spirit of the time was very evil: let us pray God that it may never return.

But it is interesting to reflect upon its origin, as our thoughts may give us some guidance in the confused circumstances of our own age. During the Middle Ages Europe was, to a degree which we cannot now realise, a religious unity. The Church was enormously powerful. It controlled education. It had extensive judicial powers. Its officials were often great officers of state. The whole system was possible because the same modes of thought prevailed. The great scheme of theology known as scholasticism gave men a common background of ideas. We often forget the supreme power of ideas; in the last resort their influence, and not physical force, is dominant. Now during the fifteenth century scholasticism began to decay. A form of sceptical philosophy called Nominalism undermined the accepted theology. The parish clergy, the preaching orders and the monastic houses were quick to feel the loss of religious earnestness; and grave abuses abounded. Then came the rediscovery of ancient Greek and Latin literature, the Renaissance, which brought new views of life and stimulated a pagan pursuit of pleasure that made kings, princes, cardinals and popes infamous for their corruption. The world of the Middle Ages broke up and Modern

Europe was born amid a vast demoralisation. Inevitably demoralisation produced its antidote. The better men of the time felt the call of the Spirit of the Lord. In different countries the Bible was translated from Latin into the speech of the common people. By the new art of printing it was widely circulated. The Reformation began.

One hardly dares mention the Reformation, so variously is it judged and so great is its power still to excite controversy. Much wrong was associated with it. Evil is always done when revolutionary upset gives evil men exceptional opportunities. But in its essence the Reformation was a great attempt at religious reform; and it produced a counter-Reformation in the Roman Church which gave renewed vitality to that organisation. All might have been well had men understood that the heritage of the Renaissance was freedom of thought, and had they agreed to tolerate divergent opinions. But the past splendour of the one visible church was too impressive. All at heart longed for a new unity, though they differed profoundly as to what that unity should be. So Roman Catholics sought to extirpate Protestant heresy; Churchmen persecuted Independents; Calvinists oppressed Unitarians. Each, as he believed for the greater glory of God, sought to impose his system on his fellow-men. The ultimate result was merely disastrous. At the beginning of the eighteenth century the fire of religious zeal grew dim, and fanaticism gave way to sheer indifference. Then in this country there came another tragedy, or succession of tragedies. At the beginning of the eighteenth century it is computed that only one-twentieth of the people were Nonconformists. Relations between their leaders and those

of the Church were amicable. A wise policy of comprehension might have given us a large measure of religious unity. But enthusiasm was lacking: and a dead indifference to religion spread through the land. Again demoralisation produced its antidote. The better men felt the call of the Spirit of the Lord; and under Wesley and his friends the Methodist movement came into being. It was a movement within our body. Practically to the end of his long life Wesley exhorted his converts to receive Communion in Anglican churches. But the Church of England let the Methodists drift from her shelter; and English Nonconformity, as we know it to-day, came into being. The great Free Churches are now, I suppose, in the aggregate of their membership approximately equal to the Anglican Church. But the majority are the heirs, not of the seventeenth century Puritans as they sometimes suppose, but of that great spiritual movement which carried England successfully through the Napoleonic Wars.

Since that time we have had the most fruitful century of discovery in the history of mankind. A vast change has come over the ideas of men. Old religious disputes have faded into sheer irrelevance. Differences within the English Church and within the Free Churches are more significant than the differences between them. Everywhere men are feeling their way to setting the Gospel against the background of the new ideas. The Gospel, the good news of Eternal Life through Jesus Christ, maintains its indestructible vitality. The Lord still lives and reigns; but we need to explain how and why. Faith cannot exist in some water-tight compartment of the mind. For either religion runs through life, as the explanation and

synthesis of all, or it is nothing. So we are living through a period of profound religious unrest. New faiths, distortions or negations of Christianity grow with mushroom-like rapidity. We must endure them in the conviction that their decay will be equally rapid, remembering that superstition is a mass-expression of religious bewilderment.

We must argue as to divergence of standpoints, differences in modes of worship, which exist between ourselves, confident that truth will prevail over error and that different forms of worship correspond to diversities in religious temperament. There are diversities of gifts, but it is the same Spirit which quickeneth. As a means to religious unity persecution failed utterly. The story of the Pilgrim Fathers teaches that lesson conclusively. Conflict, semi-political, semi-theological, has been no more successful. It has merely weakened the religious vitality of the nation. It has caused men who tried to be true followers of the Lord Jesus Christ to distrust one another when they ought eagerly to have sought fellowship in the Spirit. Real unity can only result from this same fellowship in the spirit. Questions of organisation, of the precise value to be given to ancient symbols and traditions, are of subordinate importance. What transcends all is loyalty to the indwelling Spirit Who is the Lord Jesus Christ. The statement of orthodoxy which I set above any other I find in the fourteenth chapter of St. John's Gospel: "No man cometh unto the Father but by Me." "I am in the Father and the Father in Me." "I am in my Father and ye in Me and I in you." The test of orthodoxy, which no follower of the Lord can challenge, is "By their fruits ye shall know them." And the judgment

upon orthodoxy is contained in the solemn words: "Not every man that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in Heaven."

Can we not in this age learn a lesson from memories of far-off, unhappy disputes? Are differences between Churchmen to cause fresh divisions? Are differences between Churchmen and Free Churchmen to cause perpetual suspicion and friction? Can we not realise, in this time of class bitterness and grave moral laxity, that we share in common a message for the healing of the people? To preach and to shew forth Christ to men who do not know the meaning or power of His life and work is our paramount duty. To give them a vision of Life Eternal by living in fuller, and therefore more fruitful, obedience to Christ's commands; to prove that He can cleanse from sin by showing in ourselves the fruits of redemption; such is the service we can render to Him. In such duty and service we can all join; and, in joining one with another, we can take ship together and sail on a voyage of faith and hope—pilgrims who will find and make a new world.

V

JESUS: THE CHRIST OF GOD [1]

At the time when the Christian era began, the most religiously-gifted race of antiquity had, during a thousand years or more, thrown up a succession of men of rare spiritual gifts. They gradually freed the national religion alike from immorality, from cruelty and from magic. They realised that there was one spiritual Power in the Universe. The Creator and Sustainer of the whole they affirmed to be God, Who was Wisdom and Righteousness. To seek Him and to serve Him was, they thought, the essence of true religion.

The great creative epoch of Jewish religious thought is, at its best, represented in the literature known to us as the book of Isaiah. It ended during the Exile. Afterwards ritualism and agnosticism, Deism and apocalypticism, emerged to balance one another during centuries in which men had, in no small measure, lost confidence in the strong simple teaching of the great prophets. And then Jesus of Nazareth appeared. He was a Jew in whom probably there was no Gentile blood; but He was brought up in the half Jewish, partly Syrian and partly Greek, environment of Galilee. His origin was humble. He came from a workman's house. It is unlikely that He had an

[1] An Address at the Girton Conference of Modern Churchmen, September, 1921.

exceptional education. Yet, though He normally spoke Aramaic, He could certainly read Hebrew and He probably knew Greek. Clearly His natural ability was great. We can safely infer from the Synoptic Gospels that He used language with the skill of a great artist in words. His insight into the minds of men was amazingly searching and sure. He had closely studied the writings of the greatest religious teachers of His race: He was responsive to the spiritual longings of His age. But His religious judgments were emphatically His own. With absolute freedom and confidence He would accept, reject or re-fashion views as to the nature of God which belonged to the Jewish tradition. Using the simplest words and pictures, so that His message was fit for the common people, He built up a clear, coherent system of theology. The Fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man, the kingdom of God, Eternal Life—the whole purpose of man's existence as a creature of God was plainly set forth. The way in which the scheme was expounded showed that it was more than an intellectual construction. It was the interpretation by Jesus of human needs, longings and aspirations as He observed them in others and felt them in Himself. His own actions, His need of prayer and quiet meditation. His certainty that He could gain strength from prayer, the way in which He related all His teaching to the guidance of God and based it upon His sense of God's presence with Him—all show that there was a profound unity between His spiritual perceptions and their intellectual expression. The richness of His spiritual life was associated with rare psychical strength. His power to cure mental disorder was remarkable. His personality was extraordinarily impressive. Moreover,

with His natural ability and spiritual confidence, there was combined a character of quite singular beauty. He apparently refused to admit that He was good as God is good: yet He was so different from normal men that those who knew Him best felt that His moral perfection was Divine rather than human. He seems to have been absolutely loyal to His spiritual perception. And He did not gain a limited self-mastery by avoiding life's difficulties and dangers. His public life was full of hardship. He endured poverty, faced the dangers of popularity and hostility, lived among outcasts without defilement, spoke readily with educated men who sought to entrap Him in His speech. His character was tested to the full; and He bore the test triumphantly. At the end, after a public ministry of brief duration, clerical Judaism found Him intolerable and encompassed His death. His spiritual greatness, His loyalty to God, that purity of heart, mind and spirit which pierced through sham and shame as a flaming sword, brought Him to the Cross. He died. . . .

Is He alive for evermore, God's perfect witness to Himself among men? This really is the question which we ask when we inquire whether His Person and work will be central in human religion. We do not affirm that the Lord's Person and work have been central in Christianity in the past. There is much to be said for the view that they were, from the end of the second century to the close of the Middle Ages, concealed beneath alien ideas derived from the mystery religions; that the Reformation was the hammer which broke the husk within which, under God's providence, the kernel had been preserved during the decline and eclipse of European civilisation.

Christian belief and practice are still so varied and disappointing that we cannot contend that at present Jesus has attained effective centrality in the Christian churches or in what is called Christian civilisation. But can we not say that, as religion grows in richness and purity, Jesus comes to His own? Is it not true that His influence, His power to mould thought and aspiration, will endure so long as humanity shall exist upon the earth? Is it credible that others will appear who will surpass Him as He surpasses saints and sages of history? In short, has God's anointed, the Messiah, come, "or look we for another"?

Though it may be urged that man cannot have knowledge of such spiritual finality as Christians claim for Jesus, the objection does not seem to be reasonable. We may legitimately contend that, because man differs from all other animals in that he is aware of and can create spiritual values, there is in him something that adumbrates the nature of God. We say that man is not only a part of the evolutionary process. His highest attributes must seem to show its purpose. They reveal the nature and the end of God's plan. A right understanding of man as he is ought to lead us to a knowledge of what the perfect man should be; and that knowledge should disclose the nature of God so far as His nature needs to be, or can be, grasped by humanity. Reason and intuition combine to justify the belief that our Lord had a right understanding of what man can become. The centrality of Jesus implies that He gave a sufficient explanation of the spiritual reality to which man's moral and religious instincts are allied; and that, moreover, in Himself the perfection of moral purpose and religious

insight was revealed. Thus it commits us to the view that, as man develops in the way predestined by God, he will continuously approach the standard set by Jesus. Jesus will ever more completely draw men and inspire them because they will the more fully understand that He explains them to themselves. In brief, human thought, as moulded by developed aspirations and accumulated knowledge, will not sweep past Jesus but will circle round Him as the centre where God revealed Himself.

We can only determine whether these contentions are sound by examining how far they are affirmed by our own consciousness and by the nature of man in general as it is revealed by the widest and most searching examination which we can make. Now, most certainly, the Gospel of Jesus continues to be "good news" in that it gives substance to those hopes which are indubitably an essential element in human personality? Further, we are bound to allow that it is a creative force which is uniquely fertile and valuable because it urges man to progress along the natural and therefore God-ordained path of human development. Moreover, the Gospel cannot be separated from the Cross by which it was sealed. Man serves God and advances towards his divinely-appointed destiny by struggle and pain: and Jesus, in yielding up His life, gave all that a man can give to help others to do God's will. His Person and His Gospel cannot be split apart, for in life and death He was true to His message. He died that the Kingdom might come. We rightly deem Him Lord of the Kingdom of His Father because He was its perfect Servant. All who strive to enter profit by His service: they are to this extent enriched by the redemptive power of

His innocent suffering. Since Jesus was crucified Christians have seen in the teaching of the second Isaiah a hint of the significance of His death. That hint they have sought to develop : and in their endeavour many, and sometimes deplorable, theories of the atonement have been advanced. Needless to say, no theory can be wholly satisfactory so long as the problem of evil remains unsolved. But if we agree that the purpose of creation was the ultimate evolution of animals carrying spiritual consciousness, and so of human personality fit when purified for eternal communion with God, then it must be that love is the supreme spiritual principle of the whole process. The love of Jesus, suffering but triumphant, disclosed the essential nature of man's service to God ; and, in its perfection, revealed the nature of God's response to that service. The Life which was consecrated on the Cross showed how man should love God and how God has purposed to give man Eternal Life through such love, " God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have eternal life." Thus we conclude that Jesus is central as an example for mankind.

Can we say further that He is central as Redeemer and Saviour ? I think that we are forced to do so if, and only if, we accept St. Paul's identification of the living Christ and the Holy Spirit. Did Jesus show Himself as the risen Lord after His death and burial ? We cannot understand the history of the early Church unless this fact be admitted. The fact, moreover, is congruous with our expectations ; with Du Bose I would say that the victor over sin was naturally the

victor over death.[1] And, because we cannot for any practical purpose separate the risen Jesus from the Inner Light which is the source of all our religious experience, we identify the Lord with the Spirit.

Modern psychology has not yet reached a stage when we can confidently use its theories to re-state the doctrines of the Holy Spirit and the Incarnation. But it seems certain that there are in our minds regions below manifest consciousness where we receive suggestions from our fellows and whence, unwittingly it may be, we give out suggestions to them. Such suggestions are believed to influence personality more profoundly than any rational process. It may well be that in these regions of the mind we receive Divine grace: in them it may be that we have intercourse with the Holy Spirit. Mystics of all types and ages are agreed that such intercourse is impeded by sensuality and self-seeking. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." The purity and unselfishness of Jesus point to the conclusion that His consciousness was separated from God by no such barriers as exist in other men; and that, when after death His human limitations were transcended, the living Christ became one with the Holy Spirit. Because the Holy Spirit is God redeeming and saving, Jesus Christ is our Redeemer and Saviour. "He, living, cleanseth us

[1] The unifying element in personality is love, in the complete Christian sense of the word. At death the normal man is only in process of being made, and as an unfinished spirit must remain in time until his purification is ended. But if a finished, perfected spirit were released from human limitations by death he would thereupon at once enjoy the fulness of eternal life. Since that life transcends time it is conceivable that such a one could reveal his presence as Jesus disclosed Himself after His burial. Such speculation can never, in the nature of things, be more than suggestive.

from all sin." He is "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world."

The picture of the centrality of Jesus as thus presented is substantially that of St. Paul and St. John. Have we outgrown their thought? Well . . . religion is personal before it is corporate; or, if you like, it is a personal response to corporate understanding. In me the objective picture of Jesus portrayed by the synoptists kindles reverence and love. The subjective interpretation of Jesus made by the first builders of Christian theology I feel to be true: such spiritual understanding as I have leads me along the road they travelled. The authors of such a book as *The Beginnings of Christianity*[1] appear to reach what we may not unfairly term rejective conclusions by an ingenuity of atomic disintegration which a physicist might envy. Yet, when the process is ended, Jesus still lives, great and unexplained. St. Paul was more than an aggregate of the life-cells of which God secretly fashioned him: patient and painful dissection will not reveal the secret of his Master's personality.

I turn to another region of thought. Has the Paulo-Johannine affirmation[2] of the centrality of Jesus become incredible because we accept the enlarged view of the universe due to modern science? The New Testament writers thought that the earth was the centre of the universe: we know it to be a minor planet of a solar system whose sun does not appear to be of especial importance among the millions which exist

[1] *The Beginnings of Christianity*, Foakes Jackson and Kirsopp Lake. (Macmillan & Co., Vol. I, 1920.)

[2] We must distinguish between the general affirmation and the Logos doctrine which is its particular expression in the Fourth Gospel. The values and implications of the latter form a more limited subject of study.

in stellar space. We have learnt that life has existed on the earth for at least a hundred million years and that we are the products of its evolution. The matter of which other suns are composed is not essentially different from that of our own solar system. It is most probable that there are numerous other planets where conditions are, or have been, favourable to the existence of life. We may reasonably infer that the earth is but one of many worlds where life exists: that on other planets of remote solar systems the living cell has led to the evolution of animals, possibly very different from ourselves in physical structure, yet carrying spiritual consciousness. We have to view the Incarnation in the light of such possibilities; and also to regard it, not as an event which happened some four or five thousand years after man's creation, but as a revelation of God vouchsafed to man after something like a million years of human existence.

Needless to say, facts like these are deemed by many to have seriously compromised the Christian claim. They probably lie behind the popular instinctive assumption that science has made the Christian faith incredible. But, if we examine them patiently, their supposed cogency disappears.

Jesus came in the fullness of time; and whether that fullness is to be measured by thousands or millions of years matters not at all. Our knowledge of humanity's past, hazy though it be, makes it certain that the stage of human development at which the work of Jesus could have been at all effective was reached within a few thousand years, at most, of His advent. The idea on which the older theologians liked to insist, that Jesus came when the preparation for the Gospel was completed, is still entirely reasonable, and, even

if we must multiply by a thousand the number of human beings who died before His advent, we do not alter the nature of the old problem of their salvation through Jesus Christ.

As regards the issues raised by the possible existence of other inhabited worlds, our utter ignorance makes discussion largely fanciful. If life on other worlds has led to animals with our spiritual understanding, with our certainty that there are in the Universe absolute values like goodness and truth which indicate the nature of God and are eternal with Him ; if such animals know that they ought to be loyal to God and are hindered by manifold temptations ; then, whatever be their physical structure, we may affirm that they were created that they might become finite spirits capable of eternal life with God, and that God will have provided for them some method of realising their destiny. It is vain to speculate as to the means by which this grace will be given to those who need it under circumstances of which we know nothing. That throughout the universe God will accomplish His plan we may be assured. For us it suffices that on earth " God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself." Far more important than any speculation is the fact that it is our duty to make ourselves worthy to receive the gift of Christ revealed in Jesus. If we recognise that duty we make Jesus central. We then acknowledge that the risen Lord has not only an earthly but a cosmic dominion, that in every place and for all time the power of His love will endure.

How shall we answer those who say that the gift of Christ is not worth having ? We must first of all persuade them that sin is as terrible as Jesus declared

it to be. He who overcomes, or is enabled to overcome, sin opens the gate to Eternal Life. Sin is the enemy of human progress, individual and racial. To get men to accept Christ's view of sin and Christ's aid against sin we must emphasise that His standard of righteousness transcends that of the churches called by His name. We must, moreover, apply our minds to understand Him, give our lives to His service, that in ourselves the power of His Spirit may be manifest. Some are made angry by the severity of Christ's teaching with regard to sin and its punishment. They recoil, not merely from a misguided asceticism, but from the stern demand of loyalty to the God-given conscience. Swinburne deplored a world which had grown grey at the touch of the pale Galilean. In the light of recent experience one can say that the Christ-accepting world would be a better place than one striped scarlet and black. But a Christ-accepting world would not be grey. Fellowship based on spiritual freedom is Jesus' ideal of human intercourse; and the ideal allows complete expression to man's finest creative impulses. If men sought to reveal the God of Jesus in all their corporate activity, they would of necessity surround themselves by beauty and joy as they tried to make life truly sacramental. The present degradation of human life is due to man's refusal to accept Christ's estimate of its values and duties. It will endure so long as the work and Person of Christ are refused their right place in human thought and aspiration.

Yet man will never be satisfied by failure. Religion is a necessity of his nature. As he reflects about himself, he asks Whence? and Whither? and Why? He feels the glory and the splendour and the mystery

of the setting of life's stage. He is puzzled by the brevity of his sojourn here. He is oppressed by life's tragedies. He would know whence come the creative impulses which have made civilisation, and will yet make it better than it is. He asks the meaning of the play in which he is perforce an actor. He feels the need of moral strength, seeks to give substance to his hopes, longs for perfect comradeship. . . . To this bundle of questions and longings and aspirations, Jesus gives the complete response. That is why He is both central and universal: the Christ of God.

VI

THE PROBLEM OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION [1]

PROBABLY there are few teachers, other than professional theologians, who have ever seen a copy of the book called *Essays and Reviews*, which, published in 1860, stirred English orthodoxy to its depths. There is little in it which would now excite opposition. But it was the first book which, coming from a group of prominent churchmen, showed that literary criticism and scientific discovery had made a new religious outlook necessary. An innocent essay in it by Dr. Temple, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury, caused his nomination to the See of Exeter to be violently opposed, and two contributors to it were indicted for heresy. I have not mentioned the book to recall dead controversies, but because one of the essays incidentally contains a statement worthy of our serious consideration. In his essay on the National Church H. B. Wilson said, " It may not be very easy by a statistical proof to convince those whose preconceptions indispose them to admit it of the fact of a very widespread alienation, both of educated and uneducated persons, from the Christianity which is ordinarily presented in our churches and chapels. . . . It has certainly not hitherto received the attention which such a grave circumstance demanded, that a number equal to

[1] An Address to the Association of University Women Teachers, January 5th, 1922.

5¼ millions of persons should have neglected to attend means of public worship within reach on the Census Sunday in 1851, these 5¼ millions being 42 per cent. of the whole number able and with opportunity of then attending ? "

I ask you to compare the situation now, some seventy years later, with that then described as " grave." Instead of 42 per cent. I suppose that we should have to admit that between 70 and 80 per cent. of the adult population seems now to be indifferent to Christian worship. Some say that the position, from the Christian point of view, is even more unsatisfactory. Chaplains who had especially favourable opportunities during the war for reaching sound conclusions, asserted that 90 per cent. of the men in our armies had no real understanding of, and were not directly influenced by, the Christian Faith. There have, of course, been other times in our national history when a similar alienation from religion could be observed. In the fifteenth century a wave of agnosticism, technically called scholastic nominalism, led to a widespread religious decay, which prepared the way for the suppression of the monasteries and the chaos of the Reformation. In the first half of the eighteenth century similar religious lassitude prevailed. It was overcome by the Evangelical revival which rekindled faith but left the National Church with but half the Christians of the country within its communion.

We may anticipate that sooner or later there will be another uprush of religious enthusiasm among our countrymen. But who will guide it ? What will be its outcome ? It is often assumed that religious change is equivalent to religious progress. But the assumption is untrue. Just as, by a well-known

economic law, bad money will drive out good unless a country enjoys a wise financial administration, so crude religious beliefs will triumph over more reasonable and more valuable interpretations of the spiritual nature of the Universe if a race is not wisely guided. There are some disquieting symptoms of a barbarisation of religious thought among us similar to that which showed itself when Græco-Roman civilisation began to decay. How is the English race to be preserved from dubiously ethical, irrational, pseudo-scientific cults when it again feels the need of an outlet for its latent spiritual earnestness? There are the clergy of the various denominations, you will say. It is true; but, unfortunately, no Church in this country can get a sufficient supply of good men for its ministry. I understand that teachers sometimes complain that they are inadequately paid. They are now almost opulent compared with the average Christian minister. Financial motives, the dread of poverty, the practical certainty of narrow means, do not deter some good men from taking up ministerial work. But the country does not produce at present enough men of energy and ability and character to go round, and so the Churches go short. A sentiment, bound up with immemorial tradition, prevents religious bodies from making use of women save in subordinate positions where the influence of an able woman would be unduly restricted. The Churches are, and for some time are likely to remain, deplorably understaffed. We have, it seems to me, to recognise the fact that not with the clergy, but with the teachers of the country, rests at present the ultimate power of religious influence. Under the system that has grown up within the last fifty years every child at the most impressionable

period of its life is committed to the care of a teacher who, directly or indirectly a servant of the State, seeks to make that child a good citizen. The view of life which the child will hold in later years is largely the result, in the first place, of home environment, and, secondly, of the education received at school. The home surroundings are themselves in turn partly due to the influence of teachers a generation earlier. Let us freely admit that, so far as the Churches retain their hold on sections of the population, their power to mould thought and conduct surpasses that of the schools. But, as things are, the larger part of the nation receives from the education given at school practically all its religious knowledge and spiritual training.

To an extent not generally recognised, the religious future of the English people lies with the teachers. The teachers are the servants of the State, through whom the nation must develop the religious instincts of the mass of its citizens. Some teachers—let us be frank—do not like the task of teaching religion. Their own religious views are indefinite ; dogmas of their youth they have discarded ; they remember with dislike the religious bitterness of the old School Board elections. They hate bigotry, and are not prepared to manufacture little bigots. Well—no one ought to teach religion who dislikes the task—that seems to me axiomatic. No one can possibly teach a religion in which he does not believe without doing grave harm both to himself and to his pupils. But it is happily true that among us the Christian valuation of life is still accepted very widely. Belief in Christ's theology, the Fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man, Eternal Life gained by moral conquest, by purity and

service, is general. The character of Jesus is universally respected. There are few educated men or women prepared to deny that in certain books of the Bible—the Psalms, Isaiah, the Gospels, some of St. Paul's Epistles—man's religious instincts are expressed and interpreted with an insight and beauty unsurpassed in literature. Moreover, man is naturally a religious animal. His aspirations make religion a necessity. Their appeal, their insistent quality, can be destroyed by drink, drudgery, or despair. But they reappear in the children—they are the imperishable heritage of humanity. Rightly answered, wisely guided, questions and longings lead to the faith which can move mountains. Neither as a nation nor as individuals can we safely ignore religion. I believe that most teachers feel this strongly. They regard it as a duty to protect and develop the spiritual instincts of the children committed to their charge. But they demand that religious enthusiasm shall be joined to clear insight. They feel to the full the modern recoil from primitive folk-lore, unedifying history, and barren dogma. They are, moreover, heirs of the Renaissance of the nineteenth century. They have passed a great turning point in human thought, and rightly demand freedom, not so much to deny the religious traditions which their forefathers accepted, as to emphasise only such as seem to them indubitably true and spiritually valuable. We are at present still learning how to set our faith against the background of the new knowledge. Until the period of transition is over, earnest and thoughtful Christians may justly claim to be free from interference from those who have no doubts because their minds are closed. A good teacher, like a good minister, will be anxious so to set before young people

the elements of his faith that in later years they shall join intellectual confidence to spiritual understanding.

We believe in Christianity just in so far as it gives a reasoned and reasonable explanation of what Clough called " the problem of our being here." I need hardly say that personally I am convinced that no alternative explanation will endure comparison with the Christian scheme ; and most certainly no other view of life has in it the creative strength—the power to make all things new—which proceeds from real faith in Christ. This conviction has grown and grows as the years pass by. I have come to share the feeling of Bishop Lightfoot, whose studies led him to realise that certainty with regard to many minor points of Christian belief was unattainable, but who was unperturbed because he did not doubt the great fundamental issues.

Let me now at the risk of some repetition turn from generalities ; and let me premise that though I may speak dogmatically I am well aware that I can only give a personal impression of the present situation with regard to religious education in this country. In the first place, is it not true that for the most part religious education has practically escaped from the control of the various churches ; and that the churches are accepting the fact ? The old struggle between Churchmen and Nonconformists for control of the elementary schools is effectively coming to an end. In part this has come about because the old lines of cleavage have vanished in the present chaos. We have Free Church Catholics and High Church Evangelicals, Anglican Modernists and Unitarian ministers who, through Martineau's influence, call themselves Nicene Christians. Of perhaps the majority of modern scholarly works on theology it may be said that by reading the book

it would be impossible to discover the Christian communion to which the writer belonged. Under such circumstances quarrels as to the kind of Christian education to be given to small boys and girls are no longer worth pursuing. Moreover, it has been tardily recognised that trained teachers must impart, and must be free to impart, religious instruction. Take the case of some of the great public schools for boys and girls. In them Anglican influence, if used, might be made effective. Bishops and dignitaries sit on governing bodies; private ties and social sympathies could be brought into action. But there is a new spirit. Teachers are entirely free from religious tests; parents do not fear proselytism. The headmaster or headmistress admits to the school library books suggested by the staff without much thought as to the limitations of their orthodoxy. I have examined the books concerned with religion and theology in some school and training-college libraries so formed. As a rule they have been well chosen. The proportion of works of relatively little value is singularly small. But, though the choice has been good, the range has been wide. A stiff Anglican or Nonconformist divine of half a century ago would have regarded many with horror.

If I am right in my inferences, scientific scholars will in the future teach the teachers, and the teachers in turn will determine the development of English religion. The Churches tried to rule the schools. They failed inevitably, for no one communion can impose its will on a national system of education. Henceforth the schools will rule the churches. By that path comes reunion.

A pessimist may say: "No! By that path comes irreligion, or at least, the virtual repudiation of Christianity." Well, personally, I see few signs of such an

outcome. It is remarkable that, as sectarian quarrels have died away, the desire of the community for definite religious instruction, Christian in character, has become stronger. The administrative bodies of various kinds that control education, released from the fear of clericalism, are seeking to encourage Christian instruction. They feel the importance of the Christian view of life, the value of Christian standards of conduct. They realise that these *desiderata* cannot hang in the void. They must be joined to simple Christian doctrine. Mere Bible reading has failed. The elements of a creed must be taught. And there is increasing willingness to allow teachers, who themselves value the Christian tradition, to give the rudiments of their faith to the children under their charge. A feeling is growing up that great latitude to teachers is a safe policy, because, on the whole, the teachers represent the religious attitude of the more serious-minded and best-educated members of the community. The war has made all who are concerned in guiding the community realise alike the need of religion as a basis of conduct and the danger of irrational religion. Recently I read with interest the last Annual of the Rationalist Press Association. I found myself in sympathy with articles by writers of eminence who were attacking the scientific superstitions from which Christianity is freeing itself. Though naturally there was much in the volume which seemed to me unsound, it was amusing to discover that some writers were manifestly uneasy at finding that, with the decay of Christian belief, cults of dubious ethical value, far less intellectually respectable, were growing in strength. In fact, there are many among us who would, perhaps unhesitatingly, bring in a verdict of " Not proven," if asked to affirm

the truth of the essentials of Christian belief; yet they feel that, if the practical alternatives are theosophy or the secularism which denies all spiritual reality and preaches a sordid struggle for economic advantage, Christian teachers in the schools of the country must be permitted, if not encouraged, to proclaim a better faith.

I pass now to the practical question, which is of supreme importance to you all. How is Christianity to be taught? Administrative difficulties we are rapidly solving by our national genius for "muddling through." In more respectful and more accurate language we are finding the path to success by experiment, indifferent as to whether a logically perfect scheme will result. But, if it be granted that those whom you serve desire you to teach essentials of the Christian faith, granted that you are willing, granted that you have a large measure of freedom, and that your practical experience will ultimately determine the regulations under which you work, what principles should guide you? I will lay down four rules which at no stage of religious education can henceforth with safety be neglected:

1. You cannot separate Christianity from religion in general.

2. You cannot isolate Christianity from modern thought.

3. You must present Christianity in the light which recent discovery throws on its origin and development.

4. You must show what Christianity has done for human civilisation. You must in detail justify your belief that it is still of supreme value to mankind.

Let me comment briefly upon these guiding principles.

In the first place, you cannot separate Christianity

from religion in general. Our faith arose out of Judaism: its intellectual structure owes much to Greek philosophy. Like all religions it is an attempt to explain man's relation to the Universe, to give a reason for and encouragement to the best that is in him, to make his natural aspirations conquer animal appetites. Other religions make similar attempts. We hold, and therefore ought to be able to justify our belief, that the Christian solution of the enigma of human life is better than the alternatives offered. Missionaries are increasingly studying other religions that they may the more effectively present the Christian revelation. With the shrinkage of the world alien religious ideas will progressively impinge upon the thoughts of us all. You need to inculcate, not contempt of other faiths, but the superior wisdom, the greater moral power, of that faith derived from Christ to which our civilisation at present owes such spiritual unity as it possesses.

Secondly, you cannot isolate Christianity from modern thought. In particular you cannot assert the inerrancy of the Bible or of the Church. It is fatal to continue the Victorian tradition of a quarrel between religion and science. As a preliminary to religious truth you must insist that the earth is a minor planet of a solar system which does not seem to be of especial physical importance among the millions with which the heavens are strewn. You must also teach the biological doctrine of evolution, the development of life through tens of millions of years, the increasing complexity of living things with which has gone increased mastery of environment, and, finally, the emergence of man from some ape-like stock. Such facts are henceforth to be the background of man's thinking. We must

assume them and use them as we build up the Christian faith. The Christian doctrine of the Holy Spirit is that God aids men and works through men. If they seek truth or righteousness He will help them to reach truth or righteousness. His inspiration of humanity is continuous and progressive. What we vaguely term modern thought—the accumulated knowledge of our new Renaissance—is His gift. To reject it is to obscure the light which ought the more clearly to reveal Christ. In this connection it is most important that the true nature and value of the Old Testament should be explained. It is Jewish literature. The books in it were written by Jews, and gathered together by Jews. It is valuable for us mainly because it shows how the Jewish prophets were led to an idea of God which Jesus accepted and emphasised, and because in it vague expectations of a Messiah foreshadowed the advent of Christ. In it are to be found folk-lore, defective history, half-savage morality, obsolete forms of worship based upon primitive and erroneous ideas of the nature of God, crude science. The whole is valuable as showing the growth of a pure monotheism among the Jews—a religious phenomenon as remarkable and as inexplicable as the great intellectual development of the Golden Age of Greece. It is very difficult to convey these truths to young children. So it is better to postpone Old Testament teaching to the later stages of religious education. Otherwise children will learn stories, such as those with which the book of Genesis opens, which they will afterwards discover to be untrue. Of course, there is value in lessons to be learnt from Hannah and Samuel, Ruth and Naomi, and other favourite passages; but reluctantly I have come to the conclusion that to attempt to use such

allegories as the Creation of Woman, the Fall, Daniel, or Jonah for didactic purposes is highly dangerous. It encourages the prevalent belief that religious people have a low standard of truth.

Thirdly, you must present Christianity in the light which modern discovery throws on its origin and development. The Sermon on the Mount comes from the Q document of scholars which is the earliest and most authoritative statement of the teaching of Jesus. St. Mark gives the earliest record of His life and death. St. Luke and St. Matthew both depend upon St. Mark. St. Luke has extraordinarily rich material, such as the parables of the Good Samaritan and the Prodigal Son, peculiar to himself. But St. Matthew's Gospel was not written by the Apostle; it makes a Rabbinical and, to us, an illegitimate use of prophecy, and it shows traces of early Christian ecclesiasticism. These facts give us a clue to the way in which the story of our Lord should be progressively put before children. Incidents in His life, the parables, His religious teaching, so profound and yet so simple, should be the main elements in all Christian instruction until the period of adolescence. Continuous restatement ought not to dull the splendour of Christ's humanity, or to weaken the power of His Gospel. A successful teacher will make children see God in and through Jesus. Loving Him, they will love God and their fellow-men. Doctrines as to Christ's person belong to a later stage, both of early Christian thought and of religious instruction. St. Paul's theology represents reflection upon the work and nature of the Christ, and can only be profitably appreciated by the fully awakened mind. But how are we to use the Gospel of St. John? The modern conclusion that its theology is a post-Pauline development

of early Christian thought is to this generation as revolutionary as was the view that Moses did not write the Pentateuch to our fathers. We must, I think, teach clearly that the Fourth Gospel is a meditative interpretation of the life and work of our Lord cast in the form of a biography. In the richness of its sympathy and understanding it is unsurpassed in Christian literature. The great passages in it might well be taught at an early stage of religious education, together with some of the great Psalms. A child will not appreciate the depth and purity of the religious insight of either the twenty-third Psalm or the fourteenth chapter of St. John. But early familiarity with both is almost essential to the best kind of spiritual development. These passages and St. Paul's Praise of Love are keys which unlock the treasure-house of the spirit.

There are certain glorious pictures in the book called the Revelation of St. John the Divine which children should be taught at a comparatively late stage of their education. But the relation of this book to Jewish apocalyptic thought should be explained. In default of such knowledge, it is still wrongly used by earnest men and women who think to find therein proofs that the end of the world is at hand. Chiliasm revives in every age of world-disorder. It is dangerous because it distracts men from the urgently necessary task of applying the teaching of Christ to the regeneration of human society.

Finally, as a principle of religious education, you must show what Christianity has done for human society, and so justify the Christian belief that it is still of supreme importance for mankind. A beginning would be made with the story of early Christian missionary enterprise as told in the Acts of the Apostles.

But the religious history of Europe, and especially of our own country, should be used to supply stories of Christian heroism, hope, and love. Too often children are so taught as to think that the full influence of the Spirit of Christ ceased at the close of the apostolic age. They must be made to realise that throughout the centuries Christ has called missionaries to His service and prophets to proclaim anew His message. Let them see how reform ends in reaction when the fire of enthusiasm dies down ; but how, notwithstanding the ebb and flow of the waves, the tide advances. This aspect of Christian instruction has been unduly neglected in the past ; it could be made supremely interesting and fruitful. Every English child ought to know of George Fox, John Wesley, and William Booth ; of missionaries like Carey and Henry Martyn ; of women like Elizabeth Fry and Sister Dora. Such are the salt of English Christianity ; they justify its existence and prove its power. As their lives are studied, sectarian differences fade into irrelevance ; Christ is seen to be all in all.

I must end by anticipating an obvious criticism. You may say : " We recognise the need of a sound system of religious education in the secular schools of this country ; we realise that the community is willing to give to the teachers unparalleled opportunities of religious influence ; the principles that should guide us are fairly clear. But one cannot make bricks without straw. Where are the books we can use ? "

Well, a very large number of books exist which were written as manuals of religious instruction. Most of them are now worthless. They resemble pre-Copernican manuals of astronomy or pre-Darwinian studies of animate nature. The advance in knowledge

due to literary criticism and to research in natural science and history has made a revolution whose consequences we need not fear and must not ignore. The worst of unintelligent piety is that it suggests that all piety is unintelligent.

Experts have now finished their work, at all events in its main outlines. Educated men and women, and especially clergy and teachers, need handbooks which shall present the conclusions of scholars in a popular yet accurate way. Before long it is possible that we shall get a series of manuals on Christianity, like those of the Home University Library, written by experts without sectarian bias. When the knowledge which such handbooks would spread is easily accessible, practical teachers must use it to make school books. Schedules of religious instruction, which are now being rapidly modified, are of little practical utility so long as really suitable school books are lacking. But the demand will create the supply. In ten years' time you will probably be embarrassed by the riches spread before you.[1]

May I conclude with a plea and a forecast? I plead that we cannot do without Christianity. However difficult it may be, in such a period of transition as the present, to give Christian instruction, though the labour may often seem wasted, no part of the teacher's work is more valuable. Nothing could be more dangerous to our social well-being than the growth of a pagan population whose religion would be a bundle of superstitions and whose political ethics would lead them to strive for a materialistic and therefore sordid communism.

But we need not despair of the future. There are

[1] I now (1927) fear that, like most prophets, I was unduly optimistic.

great reserves of spiritual strength among the masses of our fellow-countrymen. As the distortion of feeling and energy caused by the war ceases, a religious revival will show itself. As in the past, so once again Christian enthusiasm will arise among those whom we call common men. Christ did not say that none but the middle classes can enter the Kingdom of Heaven, nor would He say it if He were among us to-day. What He did say was that the rich would find entrance peculiarly difficult; and we cannot doubt that He would repeat it with emphasis to our war-profiteers.

The finest spiritual perception can degenerate into a sort of aloof excellence. It needs to be joined to the rough and sturdy demand for justice, mercy, and good faith which is always to be found in every form of Christianity which flourishes among the people. The clear thought of intellectuals, the delicate and sensitive perception of mystics, and the stern demands of common men insistent on practical brotherhood, must all be united if Christianity is to retain its purity and show its power.

VII

RELIGIOUS REVIVALS [1]

"As many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God."—Rom. viii. 14.

ALL religious people ought to be glad when others feel themselves called to serve and worship God. Yet many among us regard the sudden appearance of religious enthusiasm with critical coldness or open hostility. Such Christians instinctively show the temper of men of the world who have no active religious faith. The worldly are almost invariably contemptuous of, or angered by, great religious movements; they condemn revivals, as we now commonly term them. Only when a spiritual movement has established itself, when its beneficial character is too plain to be doubted, does it receive from the world at first a grudging, and then a respectful, recognition.

At the present time,[2] alike in East Anglia and in North-east Scotland, there have been notable signs of a religious awakening among some sections of our people. In Southern India and in Central Africa an enthusiasm for Christianity has recently shown itself so extensive that the missionary societies have found their resources insufficient for the suddenly developed

[1] A Sermon preached in Westminster Abbey on Sunday, January 15th, 1922.

[2] The religious movement of the winter of 1921–22 spent itself quickly.

need. Our newspapers, for the most part, either ignore these movements or are sceptical that any permanent good will result from them. What ought our attitude to be? This afternoon we may well meditate upon this important subject, and remind ourselves of the nature and consequence of some similar movements in the past.

Some of us are old enough to remember the days when William Booth began his effective public ministry, and the Salvation Army spread throughout England. His methods were decried for their vulgarity. Street-corner preaching was derided. The so-called Skeleton Army was organised to break up his meetings. At times the police took action for obstruction against his officers; but when in the North of England a magistrate stepped from the Bench to take a place in the dock by the side of a woman in a Salvation Army bonnet, the end of official interference was rapid. And William Booth lived to receive an honorary degree from the University of Oxford.

Very similar was the experience of Wesley and Whitefield, the pioneers and leaders of the great Evangelical Movement of the eighteenth century. Whitefield was a man of the people, with a superb gift for popular open-air preaching. Wesley was an Oxford scholar of good family, at first reluctant to do anything so unusual as preaching in field or market-place. When he took the plunge, he found his life's work. Both men at first had to endure persecution, kicks, blows and missiles from the half-savage, wholly pagan rabble of the time. Men of position, even some of the clergy, encouraged or condoned such violence. Enthusiasm was a word of contempt. In 1768 six undergraduates were brought by their tutor before

the Vice-Chancellor of Oxford on the charge that they were "enthusiasts who talked of regeneration, inspiration, and drawing nigh to God." On this charge they were expelled from the University. In the end, of course, spiritual enthusiasm justified both itself and the men whose lives it enriched. Wesley, after an incredibly active open-air ministry of fifty-two years, died in 1791 respected and honoured by good men throughout England. From the fire which he kindled came the greater part of the spiritual energy which regenerated both our Church and Nonconformity at the close of the eighteenth century. Probably few in his own lifetime thought of him as a political force: he was a prophet called by God to preach the Gospel with power and great glory. But modern historians, asking why this country was preserved from the horrors of the French Revolution, find the reason in Wesley and his fellow Evangelists. He enlisted in the service of Christ many who would otherwise have been wild and impetuous reformers. Through him the spirit of peace and righteousness became strong in the land. Though our people suffered and endured much that was evil, Wesley had taught them that, by brotherhood and not by violence, men build the Kingdom of God.

The great Evangelical Movement of the eighteenth century is specially interesting as showing how rapidly and how far spiritual earnestness can travel. A religious awakening in South Germany led to the foreign missionary work of the Moravian brotherhood. Both here and in America its influence was felt, and, in particular, by John Wesley. Wesley's early mission to Georgia failed; but Methodist success in Western England led to similar success in America. Later the

stream of inspiration flowed back to England, and so fired William Carey and his friends of the Northampton Association that they started to preach the Gospel in India. In all this wonderful development there was a unity. We seem to see many movements in different lands. In reality the same Spirit was dominant in all ; the same purpose and the same power, in Anglican, Methodist, Baptist and Moravian, showed that all were fundamentally one in Christ Jesus.

In the light of such facts of history, we may well inquire why it is that religious revivals, when they begin, should be so disliked alike by the worldly and the placidly religious Why are they commonly viewed with prejudice, and their leaders often reviled ? The early Christians, products of the greatest religious movement in the history of mankind, were accused of atheism and foul vices. For a century after St. Paul's death the educated of the ancient world almost invariably excluded from their writings any mention of the new and despicable superstition. Now several reasons combine to create this attitude. There is distrust of the unknown. An outburst of religious zeal is inexplicable ; and the presence of the Spirit of God is disturbing. Those in whom it comes to dwell see the world in a new light, and comfortable hypocrisies wither under its glare. Then, too, all strong emotion is unpleasant to an onlooker ; the behaviour of those to whom the revelation of God comes suddenly is that of men at a crisis, tears and intimate speech, penitence and joy. When tears made white marks down the cheeks of the colliers to whom Whitefield preached, respectable people were repelled. It was to them as if some obscure contagion had broken out. We may admit that such a view is not

wholly wrong. As the Dean of St. Paul's has well said: "Religion is caught, not taught." In a spiritually healthy society we may catch it unawares, and grow, as it were naturally, to feel the presence of God, His Spirit guiding and aiding us. But when the Spirit comes among masses of men to whom religion has meant nothing, it may come with explosive force. Organised society fears explosions; they may be dangerous. Further, as we examine the causes of dislike of religious enthusiasm, let us admit that sometimes the fire burns out quickly; no lasting good results. The parable of the sower shows that Jesus was well aware of this disappointing end. Sometimes reaction makes the whole process not merely barren but harmful. To the house swept and garnished come seven devils worse than the first. Then, too, there are always persons ready to exploit a religious movement for base personal advantage. The greatest religious leaders have been strong to protect their organisations from self-seeking adventurers. St. Paul, Wesley, Booth were all for this reason somewhat autocratic in their rule.

Yet, when all that is to their discredit is admitted, the great uprushes of the Spirit are justified by their fruits. They bring into the presence of God men who have never been there before. In the words of the Psalmist they create clean hearts; they renew a right spirit in human society. Critics who say that the theology of revivalism is crude are in danger of forgetting that an impeccable theology may be joined to singularly barren forms of organised religion. Churches grow sterile unless quickened by just those spiritual movements which at first their members are apt to regard with disfavour. Often a movement,

when organised into a Church, loses its power as the original impetus becomes a dying tradition. Nothing is more pathetic than the sight of a great religious movement become threadbare. Phrases and formulæ survive. Once they meant much. They were the battle-cries of spiritual warfare, the best expression men could give of the enthusiasm which transformed their lives. They were in some ways like paper money, of merely symbolic value; but behind them was the gold of spiritual reality, and so they satisfied human needs. Yet there comes a time in the history of every religious movement when the spirit which made it passes away. So it was with Pharisaism, the finest religious development of post-exilic Judaism. The salt lost its savour. Insensibly a passion for truth and righteousness became a tradition of casuistry and formalism. Needless to say, men are not redeemed by defensive verbal ingenuity or by self-regarding schemes of conduct. Yet he who would break tradition to renew the power of the Spirit of God seems to upholders of tradition a dangerous man. The faith is imperilled, its unity destroyed, thought the Pharisees, by a Teacher who would play fast and loose with laws ascribed to Moses. None but a man careless of economic security or national honour would denounce the rich and preach "Resist not evil." So the professional exponents of the law of Moses ranged themselves against Him Who came, not to destroy, but to fulfil that law. The righteous and the worldly alike encouraged the mob to cry "Crucify Him!"

Religious people need always to be on their guard lest they range themselves with tradition against the Spirit of God. Let us allow that not every enthusiasm

which stirs men is divine. But when religious enthusiasm leads to a passion for justice and righteousness, for truth and love, there is in it the true Spirit of Christ. In the Hebrew prophets His Spirit appeared. His was the message, "I will have mercy, and not sacrifice," whereby the prophets set personal purity and social service above formal worship. In modern times the presence of the Spirit of Christ is similarly the test of true religious understanding. It is not an accident that those religious revivals which have been supremely fruitful have led men to Jesus, to find in Him the Lord and Saviour of mankind. For to serve God, to be true to the best that we can picture, is to follow Jesus, to make Him an example and pattern. And we cannot be loyal to Jesus without painful effort, inward conflict, renunciation, suffering. So men who are converted always make the Cross central in their outlook on human life. On the Cross Jesus showed that the Son of God had to give up all to do His Father's will. There His love for mankind was seen in service sealed by death. There in loneliness and misery He passed to the New Life which, through Him, all may win. The man who would save his life shall lose it, but he who will give it up that the Kingdom of Christ may come shall keep it unto life eternal. Such is the final answer to the questions: "Is religion worth while?" "How shall we balance gain and loss?" The same answer is put in other words in Isaac Watts's familiar lines:

> "When I survey the wondrous Cross,
> Where the young Prince of Glory died,
> My richest gain I count but loss,
> And pour contempt on all my pride."

If these lines do not ring true in our ears, if their

beauty seems faded or their sentiment exaggerated, we have forgotten the rock on which Christ's Church is built. Many there are amongst us to whom the Gospel and the Cross mean little. The war has quenched the Spirit. It has done much to barbarise thought. New cults are flourishing which are travesties of religion; for they neither emphasise that the God Who made us for Himself is righteousness and love, nor do they point to One Who, by the perfection of His service, explained the puzzle of human life. We need a wave of spiritual understanding to flow over the land, a revival in which men shall see through Jesus why they exist and what they ought to do and be. Here we are, in a Universe of incomprehensible vastness, shut in by the unknown on every side, mere dust and water, for an absurdly brief time alive. Dreams and fears and hopes, appetites and aspirations —and then quickly the end. What is man? What is the meaning of his life, its value in the whole scheme of things? There is, I am convinced, no explanation of it all, save in that revelation of God which came through the Lord Jesus Christ. And this is why, when, in a revival of religion, men are converted and find Christ, their wanderings cease and their true pilgrimage begins. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God."

VIII

SOUL AND BODY [1]

"It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body."—1 Cor. xv. 44.

On these Sundays after Easter it is natural that we should reflect upon Christian teaching with regard to the future life; and to-day I invite you to consider what we mean by certain familiar phrases—the resurrection of the body, the immortality of the soul, and so forth. In particular, why did St. Paul in this fifteenth chapter of the first letter to the Corinthians argue so strongly in favour of the doctrine of the resurrection of a spiritual body? What erroneous teaching was he combating? Does such teaching exist to-day? and, if so, what reason have we for rejecting it? Now, let me first of all clear the ground by saying that, as is known to you all, St. Paul's teaching has often been misrepresented and degraded. In some past ages it was generally assumed that St. Paul taught the resurrection of the flesh; that is to say, that there will be some moment in the future when, in the words of the familiar hymn, "Soul and body meet again." In this theory—it is nothing better than a theory—all the material particles which compose the body will come together again on the resurrection morning. The natural process of dis-

[1] A Sermon preached in Westminster Abbey on Sunday, April 30th, 1922.

solution will be, as it were, inverted. Now, such resurrection of this present flesh of ours has become incredible. The molecules of our flesh are used again and again by living creatures: they enter the bodies of other human beings; in fact, the idea of a resurrection of the flesh could only be entertained so long as the truths of chemistry were unknown. But it is unjust to St. Paul to assume that he taught any such thing. He says definitely in the words of our text: "sown a natural body; raised a spiritual body." Such notion of the resurrection of the flesh can only be held by denying that distinction between a natural body and a spiritual body which the apostle here emphasises.

To-day we reject that notion. It has no religious value in itself; it does harm by making it appear that Christian theology is bound up with bad science. We assert that the physical body is finally destroyed by death. But, you will inquire, what is meant by the term spiritual body? Why is St. Paul in this chapter before us not content merely to affirm the immortality of the soul? And why, too, does he go on to contrast the death through Adam's sin with life through Christ's sinlessness? And have his ideas any value for us who, for instance, no longer believe in the story of the Garden of Eden? I suggest that his ideas have a great and lasting value. He expresesd himself, it is true, in terms of the thought of his age and of his race. Adam's primal sin was to him, probably, a historic fact. To us, certainly, it is a symbol of man's failure to be guided by the God-given light of conscience. We have to make allowance for such differences. But when we do so, when we get down to the fundamental principles for which St. Paul was contending with the

whole strength of his being, then we begin to realise the intrinsic importance of his doctrine. He was fighting to preserve the thought of Christ; he was fighting to uphold the Lord's teaching as against other views of human immortality, which in the end empty that teaching of its moral force. St. Paul's struggle, as I hope to show, was essentially the struggle which, to-day, Christianity has to wage against Hinduism and against theosophy, which is Hinduism in Western dress.

When St. Paul began to spread the Gospel, belief in the immortality of the soul was common enough among many of the half Greek, half Oriental religious systems of the peoples of the eastern Mediterranean. Sometimes it was held among these people that immortality could be gained by magical sacraments. Some philosophers taught that the essential thing in man was as it were a bit of Divine substance which, because it was Divine, could not perish.

Now St. Paul, true to the implications of the life and teaching of Jesus, maintained that such beliefs were, to say the least, dangerously inadequate. He could only regard any doctrine of immortality as satisfactory which asserted such a complete survival of personality that moral responsibility was not lost. For St. Paul there must be in human immortality such a survival of our present personality as carries with it moral responsibility for deeds done in this our present life. The soul, so the apostle had learnt from Christ, is not some essential Divine element in man which will return to God as the stream flows into the ocean. No! the soul is our complete personality made or marred by our conduct here, fit or unfit for eternal life in the presence of God

according as we have been in our earthly life true or false to the example and teaching of Christ. After death we shall have what the apostle could only describe as a spiritual body—something which would enable us to retain our personality. With us, after death, under conditions that the imagination utterly fails to conceive, memory of the earthly life will survive, and responsibility for sins committed here will remain. The consequences of struggle to serve God and to follow Christ will also remain. We shall receive judgment, be pronounced worthy or unworthy of eternal life. For those deemed unworthy, there is, as Christ said sternly, outer darkness, weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth.

This was St. Paul's doctrine of the resurrection. It was ethical ; it was personal. But in the philosophic ideas of immortality which he rejected there was little incentive to moral conduct. It was assumed that the stream, however muddy, would ultimately flow into the ocean ; every soul would ultimately be joined to an impersonal God. To St. Paul this was false philosophy as abhorrent as the materialism which assumes that at death we entirely cease to exist. Further, the magic which pretended to confer eternal life by religious mechanism, he regarded as foolishness.

Faith in Christ, that is to say, not mere belief, but belief showing itself in Christian conduct, such faith was for the apostle the means whereby man enters the Kingdom of Heaven. It is not, perhaps, easy to realise at first the immense importance of the truths for which St. Paul contended. The ideas which he opposed have always been attractive to the Aryan races. We, like the Greeks and the Hindus, are Aryans ; and, therefore, whenever there is an age of

disquiet, the old pre-Christian fancies tend to shoot up once more. And these fancies seem plausible to us because, in spite of nearly two thousand years of Christian teaching, our mentality, our natural mind predisposes us to accept religious thought of an inferior type; and many amongst us, consequently, to-day turn from the Christian view of life after death to Hindu religious philosophy, to a system of thought in many ways akin to those Greek ideas which St. Paul knew to be worthless when measured against the religious genius of Christ. Perhaps I can make the issue as St. Paul faced it more plain if I point out how and why the fundamentals of modern Hinduism constitute a system inferior to the teaching which we get from Christ and from St. Paul.

The Hindu thinks of God as impersonal, pure being, absolute reality, the sum of all that really exists; and he belives that individual souls are essentially modifications of this Absolute. Christ, on the other hand, taught that God is personal—our Father in Heaven, the living Creator of the Universe. Man, moreover, is not Divine; he was created to become a son of God; through loving service to God he can put on immortality. His personality can become so purified by goodness, by truth, by beauty that he can gain eternal life in the presence of God. Such are the great fundamental differences. But, furthermore, the Hindu belives in constant rebirth. He pictures the soul as a solitary pilgrim wandering through many stages of existence before it reaches the final goal. Each rebirth he imagines to be the consequence of works done in the previous existence. Evil acts may even cause a soul to enter the body of some despised animal. The cycle continues indefinitely until release comes; and such

release is to be won by cessation from action. It occurs when the soul by quietness and contemplation has realised its identity with the Supreme. The end, then, is Nirvana.

To this phantasy, as I conceive it, of wanderings, of works and release, the doctrine of illusion has naturally attached itself. This doctrine implies that the Universe is unreal and delusive. an accident, as it were, in the nature of the absolute, impersonal God. So human life with its moral struggle, and, in fact, all human progress, are deemed to belong to a phantom Universe. And what now is the contrary teaching of Christianity ? We are born once, and once only upon earth. Our life here is no illusion ; it is real—a moral and spiritual struggle whose issue determines the future. God watches over that struggle, but will help us if we seek His help. Through such struggle we can fit ourselves for life eternal in the Kingdom of Heaven. And the heavenly life is not Nirvana, some negative condition of so-called pure being : it is life in a spiritual body—as St. Paul taught. Or, as we now put the matter, it is the enrichment of all the finest activities of our present existence. It is the life glorified by the perfection of our present personality. It is the life free from evil which cannot exist in the presence of God. Or, if we want the simplest sentence—it is the life active through love.

Now, surely our Christian view, the view for which St. Paul contended, is the more inspiring and the more reasonable. We know nothing of any past existence. The doctrine of rebirth is a phantasy, and the doctrine of illusion is pure scepticism. Surely, we must hold that God, in creating humanity by the majestic process of evolution, intended that man should be able to reach

an understanding both of the moral law and of the true nature of the world in which he is placed. Our astronomers are now measuring the size of the Galactic Universe; they are counting the number of stars in it; they are tracing its evolution from spiral nebulæ. During the last twenty years there has been the most amazing progress in stellar astronomy as in other branches of science. Now, have such intellectual triumphs no connection with our religious life; and, too, are not man's moral and spiritual efforts both decreed and aided by the God who has made him? What is the meaning of the fact that in the fulness of time, after life had been developing for tens, if not hundreds of millions of years, humanity appeared upon this earth? Man differs from the animals in that he can consciously seek goodness and truth and beauty. He is always, when true to himself, striving to make these divine qualities part of his being; striving to make these things of God enrich his personality; striving to know and serve God; to fit himself for life in the presence of God. And, surely, the struggle serves a divinely appointed purpose; surely the end when victory is won must be life eternal with God.

Of course it may be said, it often is said, that we know nothing of life beyond the grave; and some will argue: "Is it not, like the doctrine of re-birth which the Christian rejects, the product of mere phantasy?" To that I answer "No." I grant that there is no physical evidence—no physical evidence, at any rate, such as satisfies me—either for immortality or for re-birth; but to my mind the arguments against re-birth are no less strong than the arguments for the Christian view of immortality. If re-birth be a fact, memory is lost at death and personality is thereby dissociated. I am not

myself without my memory. Should memory vanish, the self that is made by trying to serve God would be disintegrated. But the making of that self is surely the ultimate object of our earthly pilgrimage. Either our active life has no ultimate meaning, or, in so far as we have transformed ourselves by what I have called divine qualities, we have, in St. Paul's language, put on immortality. We have passed, to use his words, from weakness to power ; and, when the natural body dissolves, the spiritual body created by moral and spiritual struggle shall remain. Let us not think of the spiritual body as some material thing. The term is really a metaphor. When we assert the survival of the spiritual body we mean that the personality of the man, who in the Apostle's language has put on Christ, is so enriched that through Christ it shall be perfected, and hereafter enjoy eternal life in the presence of God.

I have been discussing to-day a very difficult subject ; one where it is not easy to be clear and simple. I have tried to show that, as in St. Paul's age so in ours, there are two quite different views as to the nature of immortality. With them are associated different estimates of God, different ideas of the importance of the moral life. Each set of ideas hangs together. Just as St. Paul refused to come to terms with the Greek modes of thought of his age, so we as Christians cannot accept Hindu philosophy. As against false views that God is impersonal, that man is essentially divine, that human life is an illusion—as against those false views we set Christ's teaching—that God is a loving Father, that man is potentially fit for eternal life in His presence, and that human life as we know it is the battle field on which by moral and spiritual struggle eternal life is gained. We deny, we must continue to deny, for it is

baseless, the idea that in man there is a divine element passing by re-births through a succession of living creatures. We must assert, and continue to assert, that man is born into the world in order that his soul, his personality, may be so enriched by the spirit of Christ that he becomes in the full sense of the word a son of God, joint heir with Christ of the Kingdom of Heaven. In the scheme of thought which with St. Paul we reject, time is assumed to be unreal; activity in time is assumed to be ultimately valueless. We follow Christ in believing that time is real, that God through men works in time—works in time to create spirits that shall love Him. We do not say that God himself is in time. Time is in Him; it flows from Him, and He uses it to make, of us His servants, men righteous in this world and sons of His household in the world to come. Many to-day are bemusing themselves with speculations which they are not fitted either by ability or training to understand. I would have them turn again humbly to the teachings and doings of Christ. Let them find certainty in His majestic and unrivalled teaching; and let them learn from Him to do good, to give themselves to help their fellowmen. So shall they gain eternal life.

IX

THE BIBLE [1]

" Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty."—2 Cor. iii. 17.

For English Churchmen the Bible is the supreme authority in matters of faith.

" Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation: so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of the Faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation."

Such is the carefully-worded statement of the Sixth of those Articles of Religion which define the doctrinal position of the English Church. You will notice that this statement does not assert that the Bible is free from errors of fact. By it we are not committed to the view that different books do not in places contradict one another. Nothing whatever is said as to the value of the history or science of the Bible: its religious value alone is affirmed: it contains all things necessary to salvation. Moreover, the statement implies that even in matters of doctrine the Scriptures are not always decisive. Some dogmas have to be proved by, that is to say, deduced by argument from, Scriptural statements. But we are not bound by any doctrine which cannot be proved by Scripture. The

[1] A Sermon to undergraduates preached at St. Peter's-in-the-East, Oxford, on May 14th, 1922.

Reformers, for instance, contended that the three creeds of the Prayer Book were to be accepted and believed, because they "may be proved by most certain warrants of Holy Scripture." They rejected the fiction that the Church possessed unformulated traditions, not contained in the New Testament, which were derived from Christ and His apostles. They refused to accept even the authority of General Councils of the Early Church. Such Councils sometimes

> "Have erred even in things pertaining unto God. Wherefore things ordained by them as necessary to salvation have neither strength nor authority, unless it may be declared that they be taken out of Holy Scripture."

Finally, traditions and ceremonies can be modified from time to time, "so that nothing be ordained against God's Word." Yet, though every particular Church may change or abolish ceremonies or rites, the individual must be loyal to the usages of the Society to which he belongs.

This summary of the Anglican position is taken from the Articles of Religion to which our clergy at their ordination must still subscribe. I put it before you to show how absolutely central the Bible is in our authoritative scheme of faith. It is well known that the other Reformed Churches in Great Britain attach an equal, if not a greater, importance to the authority of the Bible. As we reflect upon these facts we understand the force of the old saying, "The Bible is the religion of Englishmen."

"Yes, indeed," I can imagine some of our people complaining, "but it is men like yourself, who sympathise with scientists and higher critics, who have

destroyed the authority of the Bible. You and your like are responsible for the disastrous decay of faith, with its alternatives of scepticism and superstition, which we find in England to-day."

How shall I meet this charge ? Let me say at once that my faith is rooted and grounded in the Bible. I accept without reservation the authority of Scripture as I have outlined it in the quotations from our Articles just put before you. In the Bible I find God's witness to Himself, all that I can know of His revelation in Jesus Christ to mankind. The Bible gives me all the great principles of religion, all the spiritual truths, that I need. I find there supreme religious inspiration. I hold that the Christian faith must be built upon the teaching of the Bible, that its development can be rightly fostered only by a fuller and truer understanding of Holy Scripture. The purity of Christian worship, belief and conduct is endangered whenever men add religious ideas and practices for which, when we thoughtfully examine the Bible, we cannot claim Christ's authority or approval. Are we in doubt as to some particular aspect of Christian dogma ? Our final court of appeal is the New Testament interpreted in the light of the older Hebrew Scriptures. Can we justify some particular kind of worship and allied teaching ? We must find out whether it is consonant with the mind of Christ as revealed by an intellectual study of the Gospels.

" Ah, but," the old-fashioned Christian will object, " there is some trap here, some juggling with words. You do not believe the Bible nor does any scientist or so-called higher critic."

Frankly, I do not believe that the varied literature which we call the Bible is free from error. Its science

is primitive. For instance, all who wrote in it believed that the earth was the fixed centre of the Universe. The book which stands first in it opens with an account of creation which is incorrect, though the great Hebrew prophets never mention and perhaps did not accept the Genesis views of the origin of the world and man. But what does it matter? We go to the Bible for religious truth, not for anticipations of the results of modern scientific discovery. Of course, if the religious teaching of the Bible were incompatible with the conclusions of modern science, we should indeed be in trouble. But the fact is that the view of God and of his relation to man which we owe in its final form to Christ, combines better with the modern scientific outlook than with early Jewish speculation.

So also with regard to history. Scholars, by discovering and translating the records of Egypt and Babylonia, have given us a new knowledge of the history of the nations surrounding Israel. At the same time analysis of the earlier Hebrew Scriptures has shown that in them early documents and traditions were welded together with much older material at a somewhat late date. We have thus come to realise that the growth of true religion among the Jews was a slower and more gradual process than we had thought. But none the less it remains an amazing phenomenon. From the most unpromising beginnings, from tribal cults vindictive and immoral, there arose ethical monotheism: the knowledge that there is one God, Creator of the Universe, and that He is righteous. The religious significance of the historical books of the Old Testament has been enhanced by the new discoveries. In their present form they give idealised history. But, again, what does it matter? We go

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to the Bible for religion : if it was merely an accurate text-book of the history of Semitic tribes which lived between Assyria and Egypt, we should ignore it.

" But," say those who cling to old views, " the Bible is either true or false. Your higher criticism destroys its trustworthiness. If we cannot believe that Moses wrote the Book of Deuteronomy, how can we believe that Jesus ever lived ? " This objection rests upon a complete misunderstanding of the nature of the Bible and a wholly groundless fear of the consequences of modern study of Scripture. The higher criticism is often spoken of as if it were a subtle and evil device of the devil. In reality it is but a way of getting a better understanding of ancient documents. It is commonsense developed by study of the growth of language and by antiquarian research, strengthened by careful comparison and by infinite patience : commonsense elevated to an exact science. It is a means of reaching truth. Men dislike it merely because the truth which it reveals does not accord with their prejudices. It destroys false ideas of the nature of Holy Scripture. So men who have these wrong notions think that it must be wholly destructive ; and fear produces blind hatred.

Let me admit that there was a time when I was troubled as to what might be the outcome of scientific study of the New Testament. I was never perturbed by the so-called quarrel between religion and science. I was brought up to accept the biological doctrine of evolution just as everyone now accepts Copernican astronomy ; and I have never been able to see why the fact that the Biblical writers held neither of these scientific truths was of any importance to my faith. Moreover, I have never been troubled by the

knowledge that in the Old Testament we have poetry, allegory, drama, myth. The Old Testament is a small library in which are to be found all the most valued books of pre-Christian Judaism. I value the Book of Daniel none the less because I know that it is a religious allegory. Anyone of you who has been inspired by *Pilgrim's Progress* will smile at the objection that it can have no value because it is not fact. If stories cannot teach or inspire, of what use were the parables of Christ? But there was a time when I wondered—it was very foolish—whether faith in Christ and the revelation of God which came through Him would survive an accurate investigation of the Gospels and Epistles. It actually seemed credible that it might be proved that the religious insight of Christendom had been wholly at fault, that men had invented, as a sort of religious symbol, Jesus of Nazareth! I now see that we know more of our Lord than ever before. I can now begin to appreciate His greatness because I can better realise the effect which He had on His disciples. The personality of His various biographers and interpreters has become more clear. Their mentality no longer obscures Jesus now that we can with considerable accuracy separate His teaching from accretions. He has become, in one way, more natural, more human; but in His moral perfection and spiritual certainty, in the amazing unity of His uniquely rich inner life and outward conduct, He reveals Himself as uniquely the Son of God. The idea that He never lived is merely ludicrous. The idea that He was half fanatic, half idealist, made by the growth of pious legend into the centre of a religious cult, will not bear examination. Modern study of the New Testament enables us to trace efforts made by

His followers to explain Him; and as we do so we find ourselves compelled to believe that He survived death. At first, by the disciples at Jerusalem, Jesus is pictured simply, objectively, as the Holy and Righteous One, the man sent from God, the Messiah of Jewish expectations, Who had risen from the dead. Then St. Paul carries on Christian interpretation, as the realisation that He will be the Redeemer of humanity becomes more clear. The Spirit of God dwelling with men, the source of moral and spiritual progress, is for the Apostle the Spirit of the risen and exalted Christ. And finally, in the Fourth Gospel, the philosophy of the age is used to explain the timeless, universal significance of the Galilean artisan Who was, and is, and shall remain, the greatest Figure in human history.

The Bible that really matters to us is the Bible discovered by modern scholars. In a very real sense it is the old loved book, for accurate investigation has merely confirmed true religious instinct. This Bible stretches chronologically from Amos to St. John. It begins with the eighth-century Hebrew prophet who first saw that the God of the whole earth is righteous. It takes us through the centuries when men dreamed of the coming of a Kingdom of Righteousness and when an unknown exile in Babylon realised the redemptive power of innocent suffering. It shows us a period of waiting when worship became increasingly formal, when the shrewd worldliness of Proverbs, the scepticism of Ecclesiastes and the painful thought of Job mirrored human perplexity. Then came Jesus of Nazareth, last and greatest of the Prophets, fulfilment of Messianic hopes, despised and rejected of men, crucified, dead and buried, but still the central hope of humanity.

And Paul preached redemption through faith and service which joins men in a brotherhood of the spirit to Him. And some Jewish visionary in superb imagery pictured a new heaven and a new earth made by the power of His Spirit. And, last of all, the writer of the Fourth Gospel, with matchless insight, revealed Jesus as the Light and Life of men, Whom to know is life eternal.

Can it be possible that when modern scholarship gives us such a Bible we can despise the gift? Surely we ought to thank God for our spiritual freedom. We are no longer enthralled by petty superstitions. We have done with tedious and tiresome casuistry based on isolated texts. The Bible is something far greater than a handbook of theology. It is the record of a great movement, unequalled for moral and religious value in the history of humanity; and we get the record, not smoothed out in some sleek history, but in great rough fragments. Often enough we ask in vain: What did the prophet really think? What did Christ really do or say on this particular occasion? What mental process led to this or that statement or argument in Gospel or Epistle? Often enough we find in the Bible traces of what we now deem superstitions, the influence of popular fancies of no permanent value. All this is natural, just what we should expect, for the Bible shows us the Revelation of God, not in some perfect scheme of abstract thought, but in the writings of men buffeted by the storms of life and baffled by human limitations as they tried to understand God's nature and purpose and to explain our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Too often Christian people take this or that novel result of modern study and exaggerate its importance

till all sense of proportion is lost. They are like children who cannot see the majestic power of a great river because straws float in petty eddies near its banks. The Revelation of God in Jesus Christ, preparation in the Old Testament, fufilment and consequence in the New—such is the Bible's message. Mankind cannot do without that message. We do not like it because of its moral sternness. We constantly ignore it with disastrous results. We may turn to other religious interpretations of human life, and they are inadequate. We combine the Christian message with all sorts of half-truths and superstitions, and dissatisfied turn again to Christianity, pure and simple—to the God of Love, our Father, reached by prayer, served by purity, righteousness and truth, and to His only Son, Jesus of Nazareth, " Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven."

I wish that I could convey to you the sense of freedom, joy and victory which the new knowledge of the Bible gives. There has been for Christians nothing like it since the great Humanists of the Renaissance felt that they had escaped from the shackles of mediæval Scholasticism. Men like Erasmus and Colet saw that Christianity was not some rigidly-enclosed scheme of thought, fashioned by ingenious subtlety that professed literal subservience to Scriptural texts. It was to them a gift of the Spirit of God, congruous with all that is finest in human thought and endeavour. The Church had dictated, as Catholicism still presumes to dictate, the conclusions which men must reach. It preserved things good and things bad ; it protected faith and superstition ; and, under its moral authority, moral degeneration was widespread. The Christian Humanists of the Renaissance

captured over again that glorious liberty of the sons of God of which St. Paul speaks. The mind of man resumed its onward march, independent of the Church, nominally independent of Christ, but always instinctively turning to Him for moral guidance and religious inspiration. Had the freedom with which Luther treated the Bible been preserved and developed by the Reformed Churches, many a futile antagonism between progressive culture and Christian opinion would have been avoided. Christians would still have had to fight, as they will always have to fight, against non-Christian schemes of thought and conduct. But they would not have wasted their energies in fighting battles which they deserved to lose because the Holy Spirit of freedom and of truth was with their opponents. Unfortunately the successors of the Reformers ended by accepting traditional estimates of the Bible. They built a new Scholasticism which in this country finally collapsed half a century ago. At length, however, the way is open for us to inherit the promise of the Renaissance, to combine the Gospel with modern knowledge. When men see Christ free from a tangle of insincerities and superstitions they will take Him as their leader. To-day for the most part Catholics and Protestants alike cling with deplorable tenacity to obsolete ideas. They need to learn that freedom and truth are essential to religion, and they must abandon the fear that Christ can ever vanish from the world which His Spirit still redeems.

X

THE CHRISTIAN IDEAL OF WORLD-ORDER [1]

"Where there is no vision, the people perish."—PROVERBS xxix. 18.

IN these days any plain statement of Christian principles is likely to be resented by some members of a nominally Christian congregation if the preacher introduces politics into the pulpit and criticises from the Christian standpoint international policy. Recent words of mine brought a letter of protest. My correspondent said, perhaps truly, that many were offended by what they regarded as a "pro-German oration," and that not a few in the Abbey congregation knew far more about the wickedness of Germans than apparently I do. I would not mention the letter but for the fact that it shows the sort of misunderstanding which is widespread. Those of us who plead for a Christian view of international policies excuse none of the crimes of the war. But we say that statesmen and peoples must, at the present time, seek to get the vision of Christ. They must try to see the world as He saw and still sees it. You cannot build a new world-order on a basis of hate. To brood over past injuries, to refuse to forget or forgive, is very natural. Yet it has no value. Both in private and in public life, ill-will, jealousy, suspicion, the desire

[1] A Sermon preached in Westminster Abbey on Sunday, September 10th, 1922.

for revenge, do harm. They are, as it were, sand in the machinery of life. They prevent the wheels from going round smoothly. You hear the shrill squeal of the grit; there are jolts, stoppages, sudden starts instead of steady rhythmical motion. It is a commonplace that there is constant friction if two people work side by side and dislike one another. In a house, a factory, an office, ill-will upsets everything. We all know of people who are competent and energetic, but who cannot work with others because they have some morbid streak of suspicion and jealousy, which makes men say that their temper is impossible. Sometimes such a temper leads to moroseness and actual insanity. More often it embitters the souls of those whom it dominates and makes their lives a misery. All whose minds are healthy know, from their own experience, that it is not worth while to cherish the memory of injuries. We find that, in common language, it pays to help our fellow-workers freely. Generous service in small things is oil to the wheels of life. In fact, it is absolutely true that we could not all live to ourselves without destroying civilisation. We must, to a certain extent, bear one another's burdens. And, moreover, the men and women who make a true success of their lives manage to call out the best in others by giving the best in themselves. They create friendliness by being friendly. If it is necessary to be firm, they are resolute without being harsh or rude. They try to persuade, because persuasion is more effective than rough denunciation. Conciliation, rather than conflict, is their aim. In fact, they seek to overcome evil with good.

This, of course, is the Christian attitude towards life. Throughout the New Testament we are constantly

urged to adopt it. And, on the whole, experience proves that it works. Of course, it is not always successful. There are people with a sort of moral kink, who will not respond to generosity, frankness, kindness. You find that you cannot trust them. In dealing with them you may easily be over-reached and suffer for your attempt to follow the teaching of Christ. But, generally, the man who is honest and friendly finds that others repay what he gives. Were it not so, mankind would never have emerged from barbarism. As a great American divine has said, Christianity is true to the facts of human life.[1]

But the same principles which work in private life can, with the same success, be applied on a wider scale. Christ's vision was universal in its scope. Goodwill, patience, forbearance, honourable dealing, are as valuable in the relations between groups of men, between different classes or different nations, as between individuals. Yet even Christians are curiously slow to recognise this truth. Not seldom I have met old ladies, devout and genuinely kind in their personal dealings, who regard Liberal statesmen or Trade Unions or Socialists with detestation. There were many, a generation ago, to whom it was unsafe to say a word in defence of Mr. Gladstone. To-day you may hear on one side blind abuse of capitalists and of the economic system which they are supposed to use exclusively for their own advantage; and, on the other side, denunciations of the cupidity and laziness of the workers. All such prejudice, and the heated invective that goes with it, is worthless. All classes of the community have their faults; but the

[1] This thesis is worked out by W. P. Du Bose in that fine book, *The Gospel in the Gospels*.

various classes must co-operate with one another if society is to continue. And, if I create a bogey of some class of which I know nothing personally and angrily declaim against it on every possible occasion, I shall be doing what I can to make friendly co-operation impossible.

Our capitalist system is by no means perfect; it gives an unfair share of the world's goods to a few successful leaders of commerce and industry. But it still passes the wit of man to devise a better system, as the Russian experiment has proved. Until we discover how to organise society less imperfectly we must use the only economic machinery that has been devised. The capitalist has not made it: human needs and human nature have done that. The capitalist does not really control it: his work would be less arduous and less anxious were complete control possible. Our economic system is built upon a most complex interplay of human motives; and it works well just in so far as, among those motives, generosity, sympathy and fair-dealing prevail. Between classes, as between individuals, there will always be the danger of a clash of interests. Class-struggles will result and will become bitter unless men seek Christ's vision and apply His golden rule, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." And remember that Christ said to the Jew that his neighbour was the alien despised Samaritan. Put in modern language, the Trade Union official is the neighbour of the wealthy lady of Mayfair. The Secularist Sunday-school teacher is my neighbour. I may think him deplorably mistaken in preaching atheism and communism to the children who come under his charge. But I have no right to hate him. I ought rather to ask whether if I had had his

circumstances, his struggles, I should not bitterly but honestly hold his views. He thinks that Christianity is a sort of "dope" which a hypocritical clergy are paid to give to the workers. I ought not to resent his belief but to ask whether I justify it. Christ said with one of those humorous touches which gave such point to His teaching: "You can see a minute speck in your neighbour's eye and not observe a piece of wood in your own." There is a society which constantly sends me appeals for money to counteract Communist Sunday-school teaching. How they would use the money I do not know. What I do know is that the only effective way of countering such teaching is for Christians to behave as Christians. Personally, I doubt whether the lurid picture of depraved Communist teaching which anti-Communists present is wholly true. The kindly insight of Christ's irony warns us to be on our guard when men tell us that others are wholly bad.

In fact, it is especially easy when we only know of individuals or classes or nations by hearsay to let our imaginations carry us away. We start with a mild prejudice against, let us say, trade unions, or atheists, or Germans. All that we read to their detriment adds to our dislike. And finally we make for ourselves a sort of bogey, which seems utterly vile. If we could meet some of these people intimately, we might still think them misguided; exceptional individuals might be as evil as are self-seeking sensual hypocrites among ourselves; but we should find that our passionate prejudice was for the most part mistaken. In return for straight dealing they would, in general, give straight dealing; they would, as a rule, respond to kindly sympathy. They would, in fact, show that in

them were the qualities which have made human civilisation; or in Christian language, that they, too, were fashioned that they might become "sons of God, joint heirs with Christ."

I am not so foolish as to deny that other races have their peculiar defects. Uncivilised peoples, and some non-Christian races like the Turks in Asia Minor, show a savagery that revolts us. During the past few years the massacre of Christians in the Near East has been appalling; some wicked deeds were done on both sides in the late war. But the time has now come when the civilised nations of the world must rebuild civilisation; and it cannot be rebuilt on a foundation of hatred. Only by a readiness to forgive, hard though it be, by generosity, by mutual co-operation can we get a new world-order. In short, we need the vision and the spirit of Christ.

We know that, so far, since the Peace, the policies of statesmen have failed. Resentment continues because the victors would not unite to end it. In this country trade is bad, unemployment is menacingly large; bankers, merchants and economic experts agree that we shall not get straight until we can restore trade with Central Europe. Such restoration is impossible unless a more generous, a more Christian, policy replaces that of the recent past. Already, moreover, men are talking of the next Great War, though none dare indicate how the nations will then be grouped. The talk is the result of the irritation, jealousy and suspicion which are still widespread over Europe. Such talk will, in the end, create the evils which it predicts unless we can get a new spirit into international affairs. The Christ-spirit would produce disarmament, and unless we get disarmament we shall

inevitably drift into another war. Largely through the efforts of Christian idealists in various lands the League of Nations came into being. That League is based on the belief that the nations can co-operate to give justice to all, to avoid ill-will by amicable discussion, to preserve the well-being of all by common action against the evils which threaten our civilisation. Insidious and deadly drugs, sweated labour, and the white slave traffic menace all the peoples in common.

We have reached a stage when civilisation must become a great world-wide unity or perish. We cannot go back to the era of separate self-sufficing states. Commerce has already knit us all together. If this land were cut off from the rest of the world—if it were isolated as it virtually was only two centuries ago—half our population would perish. And if the various countries, thus linked together by man's half-blind but indomitable energy—if they are in a perpetual state of armed jealousy, a fresh outbreak of war must come. "How oft the sight of means to do ill-deeds makes ill-deeds done." I wish that I could convey to you how vitally necessary for human civilisation at its present stage the League of Nations has become. Men distrust it as impracticable: it has so far failed to fulfil our hopes because the moral enthusiasm of the peoples is not behind it. But there is no alternative.

"Where there is no vision the people perish." I have tried to show you the value of the vision which Christ possessed. At the moment throughout the civilised world two strongly opposed currents are moving. Everywhere there are men who take a sceptical, pessimistic view of human nature. They emphasise the strength of such forces as cupidity

love of power and blind hatred. They would use cunning and ruthless strength. But what the ultimate result would be they cannot tell you. Opposed to them are the men who would make civilisation safe for humanity. They hold that "not by might, nor by power, but by the Spirit of the Lord" man advances to his destiny. They are idealists, confident that the Divine qualities in man can triumph over his animal appetites. They see a future which is the Kingdom of God upon earth. The others call them "dreamers of dreams."

"Dreamers of dreams, we take the taunt with gladness,
Knowing that God, beyond the years you see,
Hath wrought the things that count with you for madness
Into the substance of the things to be."

XI

AUTHORITY IN RELIGION [1]

I HAVE undertaken to speak to-night on the interesting and particularly important question of authority. Not, of course, on authority in relation to social organisation—which is a singularly complex problem of political science—but on the place of authority in the Christian religion. What is the authoritative basis of our faith? Is it the Bible, as some say, or the Church, or some particular branch of it, as others would contend? Can we be content with the idea of an infallible book or an infallible formula or an infallible institution? If not, how can we find religious certainty amid the modern chaos of religious opinion? What, moreover, are the permanent elements in Christianity, sufficient for our needs and sufficient to preserve the Christian tradition which has largely moulded our civilisation? These are big questions—to many as perplexing as they are vital.

We need to inquire at the outset—What is religion? Some would answer, with Matthew Arnold, that it is "morality tinged by emotion." Others would say that it is a view of the nature of the Universe, and a consequent valuation of human life, that can be expressed by certain dogmas. We should all probably agree that, when religion is divorced from right conduct,

[1] A Sermon preached in St. Aldate's, Oxford, on May 13th, 1923.

it is dangerous, if not valueless. But many emphasise the emotional aspect of religion, and say that the thrill of worship, the ecstasy of pious devotion, reveal its true nature most completely. None of these statements is wholly false; all represent different sides of the truth. Religion, I should be inclined to say, with Professor Peake,[1] is essentially fellowship with the Unseen. Such fellowship is the mystical basis of all religions. It appears, in an ugly, primitive form, in savage animism. At a later stage of human development it is the impulse which leads to idolatry and animal sacrifices. It takes a pantheistic setting in Hindu contemplation; and occasionally in mediæval Christian mysticism the same tendency was manifest. In Judaism the moral obligations of such fellowship were emphasised by the great prophets. Christianity inherited from Judaism this sense of moral obligation, and combined it with reverence for the teaching of Christ and devotion to His Person. It is, I think, fair to say that, if we test Christianity by the standards of conduct and aspiration by which it seeks to inspire men, it is supreme among the religions of the world. It is the finest product of the religious evolution of the human race. But the mere suggestion of religious evolution raises the inquiry as to whether Christianity can be rightly regarded as a special revelation of God to men. Are there elements in it which are definite and final? If so, what are they, and how are they guaranteed? We are confronted by the problem of authority.

Now I should like to say at once that, to me, Christianity is dynamic, not static. Any conception

[1] See A. S. Peake, *Christianity: Its Nature and Its Truth* (Duckworth, 1908).

which eliminates the notion of progressive development is unsatisfactory. Further, as I survey the history of Christian thought and Christian morals, I cannot accept the idea that progress is uniform. We cannot liken our faith to a building in which a brick once laid remains for all time an imperishable part of the structure. It is rather like a great cathedral, always in process of decay and repair. One age builds a magnificent chapel; another allows it to fall into ruins. The decoration of the edifice changes dramatically. Its foundations are underpinned afresh. A great tower may fall and not be rebuilt. But the building remains, with an individuality of its own, which through all changes responds to the needs of those who use it. Christianity, as Hort finely said, is not a uniform and monotonous tradition; but is to be learnt only by successive steps of life. In Christian dogma and in Christian practice there has in the past been change—change for the worse and change for the better.

Take the theory of the Atonement.[1] St. Augustine countenanced the idea that it was a ransom paid by Christ to the devil. The belief dominated Western theology for nearly a thousand years. To those who accept Christ's teaching as to the love and power of God such a notion is intolerable, repugnant alike to reason and common sense. Yet Abelard was condemned by a Council and a Pope for refusing to accept such a distortion of Christianity; and they condemned also his singularly beautiful teaching with regard to the Incarnation. "The purpose and cause of the Incarnation were that God might illuminate men by

[1] For the statements which follow, see H. Rashdall, *The Idea of Atonement* (Macmillan, 1919).

His wisdom and excite them to the love of Himself." Such is a truth which nowadays inspires us all. Unfortunately in other respects the great influence of St. Augustine was harmful to Christian doctrine and morality. We cannot read his *Confessions* without admitting that he had spiritual insight in a rare degree; but, because it was corroded by asceticism and ecclesiasticism, he contaminated the Gospel.

If we seek another example of change for the worse in Christian thought, we can find it in developments connected with the Sacraments. To St. Paul sacramental worship was a spiritual reality, the expression of the truth, "Where two or three are gathered together in My Name, there am I in the midst of them." The Sacrament works, not through some magic in itself, but through faith on the part of those who come in love and repentance to the table of the Lord. Such teaching harmonises well with what we know of the psychology of religion. But there is a sad decline to theories which pretend that by some miracle a priest can use the power of God to bring the Divine Presence to reside in the consecrated elements, and that he can thereby renew the Sacrifice of Christ and offer Him for the living and the dead, to procure remission of pain and guilt. Such theories belong to the type of unethical sacramentalism which flourished among the Mediterranean races before and during the rise of Christianity. They are typical of the paganism which entered into Catholic Christianity and still flourishes there.

With regard to the decline in standards of Christian conduct, I need do no more than remind you of the contrast between the barbarous religious persecution of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and the

virtues by which Christians in the second century proved stronger than the Imperial Government which sought to suppress them. A study of history confirms our expectation that the expression of Christianity has always been influenced by what we vaguely call the spirit of the age. It has been barbarised when surrounded by barbarism. When war has made men brutal and violent, it has been coarsened. When ignorance has disposed men to superstition, superstitions have sheltered themselves within it. After the late war, we must anticipate a revival of the lower types of religion; the better will have to struggle hard to maintain themselves. But, though the expression of Christianity has thus yielded to surrounding influences, the spirit of Christ, which Christian institutions have never wholly failed to preserve, has not been ineffective. There has been a process of action and reaction. Christianity has shown a signal power to produce men and women inspired by Christ. Though often enough they have been disliked, thwarted or persecuted by official ecclesiastics, they have been the salt of the Church invisible. Through them men have gained, and continue to gain, an even richer understanding of, and loyalty to, Christ.

Perhaps I have now said enough to indicate why I cannot find in the visible Church, or in any branch of it, the authoritative basis of Christianity. Can we find it in the Bible? There I would answer, "Yes, and No." It seems to me that men seek a false "short cut" to authority when they postulate an infallible, inerrant Bible. As a textbook of science or history, the Bible is defective. Its story of Creation cannot be accepted in the light of our present knowledge. The Book of Daniel contains inaccurate history: we can

find no place in secular records for "Darius the Mede." In the Gospels there are contradictions. When did the Last Supper take place, on the day when the Passover lamb was slain or on the night before? The accounts differ. Let us admit these facts. Science and scholarship are gifts of the Holy Spirit of truth. It is not for us, of all people, to quarrel with His revelation. But, none the less, on the Bible we base our faith. As we study the sacred record, in the fullest light which our age can give, we see the slow growth of religious understanding among the Jews, and its culmination in the Life and teaching of Jesus of Nazareth. We find in Him a beauty of character unequalled in human history, a spiritual certainty which transcends and yet uniquely illuminates our search for fellowship with the Unseen. We find a revelation of God's nature and purpose which is the most reasonable that we can conceive. We find standards of conduct which are the finest ever reached by human aspiration. Moreover, there is a unity in Christ's teaching as to God's purpose and man's duty; it has intellectual coherence and strength. Above all, Christ was true to His spiritual understanding. He, alone of all men, managed to live on earth in perfect loyalty to the Father's Will. It is false to imagine that modern critical scholarship has made it impossible for us to advance these claims for Christ. It has enabled us to know Him and His influence more clearly than ever before. Nowadays we see the Bible in a new light; but from that light there emerges, brilliant in majesty, Jesus the Eternal Christ.

Is, then, Jesus our infallible authority? In reply I ask the question: "What do you mean by an infallible authority?" Do you mean that Jesus was

omniscient, and therefore not truly a man? Do you wish me to assert that He was an apparent man with a Divine Mind? No. He lived a truly human life in complete communion with God. He grew up as a Jewish boy, was educated to accept the secular knowledge of His time. He had human limitations. For us men He is truly the Way and the Life because, in spite of His moral and spiritual insight, the future was clouded by uncertainty, as for all of us. "Father, if it be Thy Will, let this cup pass from Me." For no theory of omniscience can we abandon that sharing of our own darkness which such words express. The idea that Jesus was inerrant with regard to secular knowledge is the product of mistaken reverence. It is on His perfection of moral and spiritual understanding that we base our faith.

And yet we must not take Jesus as a purely external authority, even in this realm. It is right to say: "Thus He said, Thus He was. Go thou and do, or be, likewise." But such teaching is not the finest that can be set forth. Christ must be an authority within yourself. You must seek to make your own spirit respond to the Divine Spirit of truth and righteousness. You must bring all knowledge you can get, all the finest emotions of your being, to your search for fellowship with the Unseen. Then you will find that the Spirit within you is a witness to God, as He was revealed in Jesus the Christ. Faith is not submission to authority; it is the result of consecrating thought, will, and feeling. It is the product of yourself at your best. Yet, because you cannot live alone, or solely in fellowship with God, your faith must express itself in relations with your fellow-men. You cannot escape their influence, try as

you may; it is, as the psychologists tell us, most powerful when unperceived. So you must allow spiritual leaders of the past and the present to teach you, to correct errors of insight and mistakes of judgment. We are members one of another; faith is strengthened and purified, as we make this spiritual unity effective. Faith begins in the response of your nature to the all-pervading Spirit of God. He witnesses to Christ. But you find Christ's influence reflected whenever men inspire you with enthusiasm and love for wisdom and goodness. Learn of them with all humility. So you will find authority sufficient for your needs. It will be the authority of Jesus Christ, no coercive mechanism of formula and system, but a living power to which you freely give allegiance. When men talk about authority they usually turn from spiritual reality to some external claim; they argue for a book, a formula, an institution. So intolerant disputation arises. Put spiritual things first. The true life of the spirit is life in Christ. Find that life, and you will satisfy your needs, as St. Paul satisfied his own.

XII

THE WONDERFUL WORKS OF GOD IN THE CREATION [1]

When Thomas Fairchild, nearly two centuries ago, bequeathed a sum of money to establish the lecture now called by his name, he suggested that his lecturer should consider one of two subjects. Both of these were obviously due to his botanical interests ; interests derived from his occupation as a gardener, which led alike to his written works and to his membership of the Gardeners' Company. But we may doubt whether he fully realised what an opportunity he was giving to a lecturer in the twentieth century when, as the first of his two alternative subjects, he selected " The Wonderful Works of God in the Creation." No practical gardener, who brings imagination to the study of trees and flowers, can fail to be impressed by the mystery of the processes which it is his business to use. There is something wonderful in vegetable life. It is insurgent : wherever there is a little moisture and a little sunlight, some plant appears. It may be merely such a primitive organism as produces green slime, but the general truth is exemplified : vegetation does not neglect its opportunities. Then, too, there is the whole complex mechanism of cross-fertilisation. The flowers and fruit trees, which we

[1] The Fairchild Lecture, delivered at Shoreditch Parish Church before the Master and Wardens of the Worshipful Company of Gardeners, on May 23rd, 1923.

value for their beauty and their use as food, thrive because of the insects which pass from male to female flowers. Since Fairchild's day the geologists have discovered that our gardens and orchards represent a relatively late, advanced stage of evolution in the vegetable kingdom. The development of insect life preceded and aided the birth of what we most value in plant life. When our coal measures were being laid down, possibly twenty million years ago, earlier forms of vegetation, horsetails and club-mosses, grew rankly, and from sunlight made the coal which we burn. There were neither fruit trees nor gaily coloured flowers, and even the lowest mammals had not come into being. What a marvellous unity between the animal and vegetable kingdoms do such facts indicate!

Take another instance of the mystery of nature, over which we can imagine Fairchild pondering; what is it that makes possible the varieties of flowers and fruits which the gardener can create? From the crab-apple has come the Ribston Pippin. "Into the unpromising wild kale by the sea-shore we have to read back all our cabbages, cauliflowers, and curly greens." Apparently Neolithic man got his wheat by cultivating a sort of grass with large seeds which still grows wild on Mount Hermon. It is certain that within the last generation mankind has profited enormously by the successful breeding of quite new types of wheat. Whence came the potentialities of such marvellous change? The abbot of an obscure Illyrian monastery, some sixty years ago, sought to investigate this problem by experiments with sweet-peas. His work, unnoticed until after his death, gave a clue to the way in which characters are inherited. Mendel died

unknown to fame, but he now ranks among the great pioneers of scientific discovery. The mystery which he partially unveiled still perplexes men—God's secrets are well hidden—but we have advanced another step on the long, perhaps interminable, road which man must travel before he understands the mechanism of the Universe of which he is a part. . . . The Universe of which he is a part, a product. Man belongs to the Universe; he is made of the dust of the earth. So Fairchild would have admitted. But what would he have thought of the story of man's creation which modern biologists unite to affirm? Would he have resented the knowledge that man is literally a distant cousin of the lower animals? Would he have scouted the idea that all life is one; that man and the flowers, the insects and the fruit trees share a common, though stupendously remote, origin? Probably we must answer, "Yes." And yet we may expect that, had he been living to-day, scientific sympathy would have led him to understanding. Doubtless, in common with other men of his age, he revered the genius of his contemporary Newton, whose researches finally put an end to the old theological belief that the earth was the centre of the Universe. And so, now, he would have rejoiced to think that Darwin was buried near Newton in Westminster Abbey. Darwin's investigations, it is true, have destroyed another theological doctrine. They have upset the belief that man was specially created by God. But what does the change of standpoint imply? It enables us to picture a little more accurately the external mechanism by which God brought man into existence. Yet the mystery of the whole process remains unfathomable. A slow, incredibly prolonged process of change; from

a segmented worm to a fish; from a fish to an amphibian, born in the water, but passing its adult life on the land; then from amphibian or reptile the evolution of the mammal; then the emergence among mammals of apes. And finally man. We carry within our bodies traces of this amazing history. In the human embryo appears the notochord, a sort of tissue-scaffolding which enabled fishes to build a backbone. A gill-cleft which recalls the fish-stage of our ancestry is transformed into the Eustachian tube. So God has worked and man is the result. But will you then argue that man is nothing more than the animals from which he has sprung? It is absurd. Man has what they have not. He can reason with abstract ideas; he knows good and evil, is conscious of spiritual values—in the old language, is a son of God. In their discussions during last century men of science and divines alike too often forgot that past history does not alter present facts. Just as the ape has an intelligent mastery of his environment to which a worm could not attain, so man has a mind capable of types of understanding far beyond the apes. Religion is natural to man, for it is the response of what he is to the unseen Power, Whose wisdom contrived his creation. As Hort, the greatest of modern English theologians, wrote more than thirty years ago, Darwin's epoch-making scientific work "adds nothing to the proof or disproof of the existence of God, or to the proof or disproof of human immortality." It has merely given us a little more knowledge of the exquisite machinery of the universe. If you postulate that the machine works by itself, you can find in it neither meaning nor purpose. You must then assume that humanity is the chance product of a whirl of electrons,

a product destined to vanish as the earth grows too cold to support life. But if there is—as we all really believe—a meaning in human life, then evolution must have been contrived by a spiritual Being for spiritual ends: the ideas of God and human immortality become necessary to solve the problem of human existence.

Doubtless to Fairchild, as to many a religious man to-day, such arguments would at first have appeared strange and elusive. And yet they derive confirmation from the whole picture of the Universe created, since his day, by men of science. Never have "the wonderful works of God in the Creation" appeared so wonderful as now.

Think, for a few moments, of the discoveries of modern physics. Matter consists of some ninety-two elements, different sorts of primary chemical stuff which combine to form earth, water and air, sun and stars. About a century ago Dalton suggested that each element consists of atoms, minute bodies all exactly alike. Only so could he explain the regular way in which the different elements combine. But did such atoms, which could not be divided by any chemical process, actually exist; and, if so, what was their size? By marvellously ingenious but quite conclusive reasoning their existence has been proved. The atoms of the different elements differ somewhat in size, but they are all less than one two hundred and fifty millionth of an inch in radius. To investigate the structure of such minute bodies seemed for long impossible; but in this present century further epoch-making discoveries have been made. Each of these inconceivably small atoms appears to consist of a nucleus of positive electricity with small electrons

(particles of disembodied negative electricity) arranged round it, the whole being in a state of vibration. The atoms of some elements, like radium, are constantly breaking up, shooting out electrons and changing into atoms of other elements. If we could find a way of artificially adding to or reducing the number of electrons in an atom, we could transmute the elements : the alchemists' dream of changing base metals into gold might come true. If we could use the energy stored up in the atom we could view the exhaustion of our coal-fields without dismay.

But, at the moment, I would turn your thoughts in another direction. It seems as if all matter is built up of electrons, particles of disembodied electricity, primal manifestations of energy. Thus to our imagination the solid world dissolves. What reason is there, then, for your blind instinct that matter is more real than mind ? Surely none at all. The metaphysician is right in asserting that mind cannot be some by-product of chemical processes in living tissue. It must be a reality independent of matter. Nay, more, in its perfection it must be that which uses the primal energy, converts it into an intelligible order, and is the source of the unity behind all phenomena. Our own minds, with their partial understanding, must have some likeness to, some kinship with, the perfect Mind whom we call God.

I hope that you will not misunderstand me. If, as the conclusions of modern physics make probable, all matter can be reduced to some immaterial manifestation of energy, I do not say that such energy is a form of mind. But I contend that the naïve materialism, which fancies that matter is in some way more real than mind, becomes the more obviously absurd. The

relation of the electron to consciousness is at present, and perhaps will always remain, an insoluble problem. Moreover, in mind itself there are degrees of reality, ranging from the mere response of a plant to light to the self-conscious behaviour of man. Doubtless the Mind of God infinitely transcends the highest types of human consciousness. But, as we use the different branches of science to make an ever more complete picture of the Universe, so the conclusion is forced upon us that, as Dr. Haldane says, "Behind the blurred vision of the world lie the love and power of God." The love of God we can affirm, because the end of terrestrial evolution is that life of civilised man which can only be perfected when love reigns supreme. Love, comprehending wisdom and goodness and beauty, must be God's revelation of His own nature, because it is the final outcome of the process which He designed. The old prayer stands: Our Father which art in heaven. . . . We must always remember that the natural sciences divert our attention from the love of God to His power, just because by them we investigate machinery and not the spiritual ends which the mechanism serves. Humanity is really the greatest of the wonderful works of God in the Creation at present known to us, because in intelligence and in spiritual apprehension man is supreme. And yet how dwarfed man is when we consider ranges of space and time disclosed by modern astronomy. Our foremost astronomers tell us that for the age of our solar system we must imagine some number like ten thousand million years. That solar system, of which the earth is a subordinate planet, corresponds to but one star of the profusion in the Universe. Probably in that part of the Universe to which we belong—the

Milky Way system as astronomers call it—there are some two thousand millions of such stars. Of them, the fixed star nearest to us is some twenty-three million million miles away, and light from it takes nearly four years to reach us. The two thousand million stars of our Milky Way system are scattered through a bun-shaped space so large that light takes thousands of years to travel across it. Even then we have not exhausted the visible Universe. Evidence seems to be accumulating to show that there are many "island-Universes" in space. That which we see as the great nebula in Andromeda is nearly a million light years away. The mind reels as it contemplates such immensities. From the infinitely small complexity of atomic physics to the infinitely great abundance of astronomical discovery we pass bewildered.

"What is man that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that thou visitest him?" The old inquiry which the Psalmist addressed to God we are forced to reiterate. And yet, do not the discoveries which he has made testify by their very magnitude to the fact that man can claim kinship with his Creator? Is the consciousness that can sweep the depths of space and penetrate into the abyss of time an evanescent by-product of earth's physical conditions? Is knowledge of good and evil, are heroism and saintliness and spiritual struggle, not of permanent value? Were we made to know and—to die! I cannot believe it. Man, emerging from the animal, has climbed into a new realm, the kingdom of the Spirit. Before him lies the Kingdom of God, on earth unrealised, but elsewhere his eternal home. By faith the man of science has been inspired to find law behind apparent confusion and an order in the universe which

hints at purpose. We also must be inspired by faith in our power to find a meaning in human life. Then we shall reach the conviction that Creation is the wonderful work of a God of power and love, and that He has made man for eternal communion with Himself. In the future progress of mankind upon this earth religion and science must go hand in hand, no longer enemies but friends, each supplementing the other, checking the extravagance which results from imperfect perception. We must join scientific theory to the spiritual valuation of human life which we find in the Gospels. So, gradually, our present religious confusion will come to an end, and the triumphs of the human intellect will serve and strengthen the life of the Spirit.

XIII

PSYCHOLOGY AND RELIGION [1]

" Great is truth and stronger than all things."—1 ESDRAS iv. 35.

IT seems to me a significant and welcome fact that those who have organised the Seventh International Congress of Psychology, now being held in Oxford, should have included in their programme a sermon in this cathedral. I doubt whether such a sign of friendliness would have been possible a generation ago. The belief then persisted that, presumably because of some obscure flaw in the scheme of the Universe, religion and science were bound to quarrel. Divines regarded men of science, if not with hostility, at any rate with wary suspicion. Many acted as though undue familiarity might tarnish the pure lustre of orthodoxy. On the other hand, men of science, conscious that they were giving their lives to the pursuit of truth, resented the timid and grudging recognition accorded to their work. In this city, just over sixty years ago, Bishop Wilberforce attacked with foolish unfairness the *Origin of Species*. In 1877 the Pope described Darwinism as " a system which is repugnant at once to history, to the tradition of all peoples, to exact science, to observed facts, and even to Reason herself." " Pride goes so far," he continued,

[1] A Sermon preached in Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford, on Sunday, July 29th, 1923, to members of the Seventh International Congress of Psychology.

" as to degrade man himself to the level of the unreasoning brutes." Naturally leaders of science were sensitive to ignorant presumption, and sometimes bitter in their rejoinder. They saw that religion divorced from truth is religion divorced from reality. If ecclesiastics demanded the closed mind, the Church ceased to be the home of spiritual freedom. So men, like Huxley, profoundly religious in temper, sought in relative isolation to solve the riddle of human life. Forced into a position of antagonism, he was cut off from that inheritance of religious experience which is preserved by worship and gives life to dogma.

Fortunately, this absurd and unnecessary strife has at length, in this country, been widely abandoned, if we may judge, as is fair, by the general attitude of representative Anglican and Free Church divines. Diversity of opinion continues to exist as to the inferences which may legitimately be drawn from scientific theory and discovery. But in so far as men of science, astronomers, geologists, biologists, or psychologists, have reached substantial agreement, their conclusions are accepted by religious leaders. " The right starting-point," says the Dean of St. Paul's, " is to examine the conception of the world as known to science." It is a sound position; but you here will not dispute his further contention that " such a conception is abstract because it ignores for its own purposes all æsthetic and moral judgments." He protests rightly that it does but give us a world of facts without values. The picture of the Universe which we construct appeals to us because of the truth-value which we believe it to possess. Into the vast time-process which evolution describes, we import the idea of progress. In fact, by the human mind we make

not only quantitative measurements, but also qualitative judgments. Both must be used in our search for reality.

You will here admit, at any rate, in theory, that the search for ultimate reality is not your business. You seek to discover how the mind works. For you it is a machine which receives and utilises certain types of raw material, sensations or "suggestions." Your business is to study how the machine works. By comparison with similar machines you determine whether its working is normal or not. But how far the sensations give knowledge of external reality does not lie within your province. Mental states are set up both by phenomena and by the mental states of other individuals; you analyse their consequences for thought, will, and feeling. You construct criteria of normality. There your task ends.

But, of course, no one is satisfied with such an ending. The normal, we instinctively protest, must be the perfect, or at least a stage in the evolution of the perfect. It must be a key to ultimate reality. This instinctive belief, of course, accounts for the popular interest in psychology. It is the science which shows us how worship works, and therefore—you cannot eradicate this "therefore" from popular belief—"that religion is true." So arises the absurd conviction that a dogma like Transubstantiation can be "proved by psychology." The same pathetic faith has led to innumerable volumes which profess to base religion on the new psychology. One is reminded of some very wise words of Sir Clifford Allbutt, who has endeared himself alike by his wisdom and his personal qualities to many generations of Cambridge men. He has said, "It is one of the misfortunes of science, as

it is of social adventure, that every new point of view, as soon as revealed in part, is mobbed by a crowd of half-educated thinkers, among whom fanatics and impostors find many dupes." You must not judge too severely the many mistaken attempts to exploit your science in the interest of particular religious opinions. Regard them rather as evidence of a strong and by no means discreditable desire to find spiritual certainty.

I may incur your censure if I enter the border-country, ravaged by contending armies, which separates your province from that of theology. Yet there are certain considerations which I venture to put before you. First of all I would remind you that, because you study the mind as a machine, you may naturally conclude that all its reactions are mechanically determined. But this conclusion is not legitimate: it is an assumption in the convenient working hypothesis with which you start. It may be granted that no argument in favour of free will is absolutely conclusive. But just as men of science accept the belief that we can know facts which exist independently of our mental states, so we claim that men are not automata. Each claim is a postulate of reasonable faith. The determinist position accepted by many psychologists is not demonstrably true. The facts which incline men to accept it prove, *inter alia*, that human personality can be injured by unwholesome surroundings, and so should stimulate us to be eager for social reform. But such eagerness, if fruitful, is a free-will offering of ourselves for our fellows. Determinism does not, of course, destroy belief in the existence of the spiritual values, goodness, beauty, and truth. But, because it denies our freedom to mould personality by these

values, it is a form of pessimism which, as I think, even our imperfect civilisation forces us to repudiate.

In the second place, I would urge that we cannot accept the view that human personality has come into existence by a process which can be adequately described in terms of mechanism. Work in the border-land between physiology and psychology, brilliantly exemplified in the researches of Dr. Head, suggests that we are gaining a more complete understanding of the process by which the human mind has evolved from the apparently automatic reactions of primitive organisms. That physiological memory can exist in the absence of consciousness; that, at merely physiological levels, there should be the appearance of purpose in response to stimuli; these facts suggest that no definite line can be drawn between conscious and unconscious behaviour. We may infer perhaps that even man's capacity to frame and use abstract concepts is the product of a continuous development from elementary physiological reactions. Yet I would urge that, though in this way we may describe the sequences which have led to man's ethical self-consciousness, we must not jump to the conclusion that the whole process is a mere unpacking of what was already latent. It may be, as Dr. Haldane has said, "that the time is not far distant when we shall be able to transform the present appearance of the inorganic world by tracing life in it." But we cannot surely accept the view that man's highest faculties exist latent in inorganic matter. Nor, as it seems to me, can we argue that they are the result of some blind mechanism. Let us grant that certain inorganic aggregates at suitable pressure and temperature conditions began to exhibit the phenomena of life; that

living organisms reacting to environment developed increasingly complex types of behaviour ; that awareness was gradually associated with purposive action, and that finally human self-consciousness resulted. Is a mechanistic interpretation of the phenomena satisfactory ? I should say, rather, that the working hypotheses which seem to suffice as "laws" in physio-chemical investigations are inadequate. We must admit that new qualities, powers, values, have come into existence. The process is not a mere rearrangement : there is in it an element of free creative activity directed to a definite end. We must find indications of that end in the highest faculties of man, in the spiritual values on which he is slowly building civilisation. And thus behind phenomena we must put the creative activity of Spirit.

The more we study the evolutionary process, the more important and, I may add, perplexing appears to be the factor of variability, of change which has led to progress. In one of your papers of which I have been privileged to see a proof, there is a most interesting discussion of instinct, which the author defines as "a reaction pattern determining the behaviour of an organism in certain definite environmental situations." Instincts can become admirably protective and of great social value, as the life of the hive and the life of man alike show. But let the reaction pattern become rigid, as it appears to be among the bees, and progress is at an end. It is the factor of variability, showing itself in man as freedom of choice, which permits movement, if sometimes downward, yet also upward. This leads me to see in the human will the central element of human

personality and to find in that will not merely the product of, but a means of response to, creative Spirit.

Whether we be determinists or not, whether we allow or refuse to allow that the will exerts real freedom of choice, we do not deny the existence within personality of controlling forces and instinctive tendencies. The conflict between the two is the most interesting of psychological investigations: it is also of profound importance in the religious life. So, though psychology has only an indirect bearing on theology, it is intimately concerned with practical religion. The religious man accepts goodness and truth as revelations of the Divine nature, and tries to set his will to do God's Will. Thence comes conflict: the eternal "What I would I cannot: what I would not, that I do." Out of the conflict come the strength and the energy which cause religion to be so potent, and sometimes so dangerous, a factor in human life. It is dangerous when in the conflict ethical values are imperfectly perceived: when, to use an obvious example, unchastity, but not intolerance, is regarded as a sin. But when the conflict is severe and successful, we normally see a marked increase of volitional energy. St. Paul, St. Augustine, Wesley, General Booth, are familiar instances in Christian history. To-morrow you will be discussing the conception of mental and nervous energy. You will be asked to distinguish between "sustained purposive activity" and its physical manifestation, the latter being the energy which can be expressed in terms of the space-time-mass notions of physics. Naturally the question arises as to whether some unknown factor, some non-physical "imponderable" is present; and, if so, what is its relation to the Creative Spirit which some of us

believe to lie behind phenomena. The physiologist may reply that his science forbids him to postulate unknowns. Yet I cannot think it absurd to hold that volitional energy, when it appears in religious leaders as a consequence of "sublimation," is legitimately termed spiritual. "Seek to do God's Will and power from on high shall be given you," is familiar Christian teaching. Some of us believe in the absolute existence of spiritual values: that their realm is the Kingdom of God. We believe that man was created to enter that realm: on any other hypothesis the Universe seems to us meaningless. Conflicts within the self we view as a necessary element in "soul-making." According to man's success in these conflicts he fulfils his destiny. And we believe that the God Who created us helps us as we try to serve Him: that, as we seek to enter the Kingdom, the Spirit which was in Christ Jesus aids us in our quest.

So far as I have studied your subject I find in it no unchallengeable conclusions which would negative such beliefs. I find, moreover, much which promises to be of great use to religious teachers and leaders. You will, I hope, throw light on many obscure and sometimes morbid religious manifestations that perplex and trouble us. But I do not think that the inflexible pursuit of truth will ever cause you to deny the power and beauty alike of will and aspiration which the religious life of man, at its best, brings into the world. You will rather agree with Rivers, whose too early death we all mourn. Was he not right when he said, speaking of the energy derived from spiritual conflict, that "we do not know how high the goal that it may reach"?

XIV

THE INFLUENCE OF SCIENCE ON CHRISTIANITY [1]

"God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth."—JOHN iv. 24.

IT is a commonplace that all religions, even though their formularies and sacred books seem to guarantee absence of change, are constantly modified. Unless religion is moribund it is dynamic and not static. It is a living process within the spirit of man; and, as such, it is profoundly affected by the ideas and emotions of the community in which it exists. Religious thought and feeling alike are influenced, for good or ill, by contemporary political, social and intellectual movements. In the domain of politics, for instance, Christianity was in mediæval times held to justify the claim of ecclesiastics to control secular princes. Subsequently it was regarded as a bulwark of the Divine Right of Kings. Some now believe it to sanction the Divine Right of Democracy. It would be easy to collect many such examples of the way in which Christianity has taken colour from its environment. Notoriously, in the domain of ethics, it has sometimes been disastrously affected by the spirit of the age. There have thus resulted bewildering paradoxes in which cynics, like Gibbon, have rejoiced.

[1] A Sermon preached in the Lady Chapel of Liverpool Cathedral to members of the British Association, on Sunday, September 16th, 1923.

But to-day I would emphasise the gain to Christianity which has come from secular progress external to itself. In the second century of the Christian era there was pronounced ethical progress in the Roman Empire. In part, doubtless, this was due to the rise of Christianity; but it was a wide movement for which that religion can by no means claim the whole credit. The ethical uplift showed itself among classes untouched by Christian beliefs. It thus did much to foster the spread of the religion of Christ, for the seed fell on prepared soil. Thirteen centuries later another secular movement invigorated Christian thought. I need not insist on the effect which the humanism of the Renaissance had on the Christian faith. As all know, it led to Reformation and counter-Reformation: to religious changes destined to be as permanent and valuable as they were extensive. But especially during the last century there has been a movement of human thought as influential and as valuable as that of Renaissance humanism. The assumptions and methods of science have of late changed the whole outlook of educated men. In particular those branches of science which are concerned with the domain of physics and biology have radically altered our conceptions both of the structure of the visible Universe and also of the development of life upon this earth. The effect of the scientific movement alike on organised religion and on private faith has been prodigious. Under any circumstances it would have been far-reaching. But, unfortunately, representative Christian leaders, with the eager support of their communions, opposed the new scientific conceptions as they appeared. Science was then compelled to fight for autonomy on its own territory; and, as Dr.

Hobson[1] has said in his learned and valuable Gifford lectures, the result has been a prolonged struggle, "in which theology has lost every battle." As a consequence, it is now widely believed by the populace that Christianity itself has been worsted.

At least a generation must pass before it is generally recognised that, with regard to religion, science is neutral. Educated men know that the traditional presentation of the Christian faith must be shorn of what now appear as mythological accretions. But Christianity resembles a biological organism with a racial future. In the struggle for existence it gains strength and power by utilising its environment. It seeks both freedom from old limitations and increased mastery of hostile forces. Amid all change its essential character is preserved, for it rests on historical facts combined with permanent intuitions and continually repeated experiences of the human spirit. Because men are constrained by their very nature to believe that goodness and truth express the inner spiritual character of the Universe; because the Christ of the Gospels continues to be their ideal Man; because men's search for spiritual reality is rewarded by a sense of the presence of God; because that presence conveys what they can best express as peace and joy in Christ; because they find in the teaching of Jesus confirmation and explanation of their richest experiences and highest aspirations; because He is to them guide and strength, Master and Saviour—for such reasons men are drawn to Him and call themselves by His name. Such reasons, moreover, have always been fundamental. We find them, in their full

[1] E. W. Hobson, *The Domain of Natural Science* (Cambridge University Press, 1923).

simplicity, in the earliest preaching of Christianity; in the letters of St. Paul and in that mystical treatise which we call the Gospel according to St. John. I do not suggest that all members of Christian communions have gained for themselves certainty reached by spiritual illumination. Capacity to gain and use the highest quality of religious understanding is rare. The great pioneers, whether in science or religion, are few. Men usually accept both scientific and religious truth at second-hand. The expert speaks with the accent of what seems to us to be unmistakable authority. We make such imperfect tests as we are able to apply to his teaching, and perforce rest content.

We must never forget that all human activity, and not merely those aspects which we call science and religion, rests upon unproved and unprovable assumptions. The existence of such assumptions is often ignored. They are there, none the less. Often lazily and hazily we conceal them under the term "common sense." Faith, however, is a necessity of existence. Zealots sometimes have contended, and still contend, that there is a moral value in blind faith. But the modern world, so far as it has fallen under the sway of scientific method, demands that faith shall be reasonable and not blind.

In science we build upon the assumption that the processes of Nature can be represented by schemes that are, to us, rational. There is, we postulate, a unity between Nature's processes and the working of the human mind. The address given this year by the President of the British Association[1] shows how extraordinarily fruitful this assumption has proved to be.

[1] Sir Ernest Rutherford, the distinguished physicist.

But, when we consider the vast domains of science which still remain to be explored, we must grant that the rationality of the Universe remains a postulate of reasonable faith. As we pass from science to philosophy and religion, we have to assume the existence of a universal Mind in order to bind together the sequences of phenomena which science observes and describes. Then, as the basis of religious faith, we further assume that those values, which we instinctively deem supreme, express the quality of this Mind to Whom all natural process is due. We thus assert that goodness, beauty and truth are not private values of humanity. Just as there is a unity between the human mind and the processes of Nature—a unity which makes science possible—so there is, we maintain, a unity between the moral and æsthetic judgments of the human spirit and the God to Whom that spirit owes its creation. Alike through the processes of Nature and through the values which He has thus revealed, God reveals Himself. Man, we must believe, fulfils his destiny by loyalty to this revelation. The man of science shows such loyalty in his pursuit of truth—a pursuit often followed with an ardour and devotion which are essentially religious. The religious philosopher, the theologian at his best, serves God as he seeks to show that man's existence would be irrational were not eternal life the reward and goal of earth's struggles. And every religious man gives similar service as he tries so to mould his life in obedience to the Divine Will that he finds spiritual peace. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God," is one of the most pregnant of the Master's sayings. It *is* a fact that, by loyalty to the highest ideals implanted within us, we experience the certainty

that nothing can separate us from the love of God which was in Christ Jesus.

In putting these considerations before you I have drawn no fanciful picture of the parallelism between religion and science. The different processes of the human mind which we label thought, will and feeling cannot be decisively sundered. As a consequence, the search for truth made by men of science has in our own time profoundly affected our religious outlook. Science has not merely created a new cosmogony against which, as a background, religion must be set. As the character of its postulates and the extent of its limitations have become more clear, science has given us a new conception of what we mean by reasonable faith. In so doing, it has strikingly altered the way in which we approach religion. Some old modes of argument and their attendant dogmas have rapidly become obsolete. A great gulf has opened between constructive and merely defensive types of theology. Among religious communions there is, in consequence, much confusion, some bitterness, and fear of change combined with recognition of its necessity. The direct influence of science and its more obvious triumphs are known to all. The earth is not the centre of the Universe: its age must be measured by hundreds of millions of years: man upon it is the derivative of lower forms of life. No orthodox theologian, in classical or mediæval times, held or would have dared to assert such facts. Henceforth they must find their place in any dogmatic scheme of faith. But there is more to be said. The indirect influence of scientific method, its patient induction, its readiness to admit divergent conceptual representations of observed facts, its absence

of exaggeration, its hostility to evasive language and, above all, its abhorrence of argument which pretends to be free but is pledged to reach assigned conclusions —this influence has not yet made itself fully felt. Theological thought, which claims to be scientific and is still widely accepted, preserves bad traditions. The work of the best contemporary theologians is free from blame; but, to anyone familiar with the scrupulous honesty of modern scientific research, the dogmatic inconsequence of much current religious apologetic is painful. For this reason young men and women who have had a scientific training at our Universities often complain bitterly that they cannot get adequate religious teaching. They are by no means insensible of the importance and value of religion. Often they are profoundly attracted no less by the teaching of Christ than by His character. They have no more desire for undogmatic religion than for hazy science. But they demand that religious dogmas shall be taught with the same frankness, the same readiness to admit progress through change, the same absence of elaborate and unnecessary complication, as they are accustomed to get in scientific instruction. Especially do they resent the use of archaic language which they suspect, not always unjustly, to be used as a cloak beneath which awkward problems are concealed. As the influence of the methods of scientific investigation increases, the dissatisfaction to which I have alluded will spread. There is only one way in which accredited religious teachers can overcome it. They must use scientific method. They must avoid, whatever the cost, the snare of obscurantism.

At the present time we suffer from what I feel forced

to regard as an unfortunate development in the religious history of England. A century ago the dominant type of English religion was evangelical. It laid fundamental stress on spiritual illumination, on the witness to Christ of the Divine Spirit working in men as they seek to know God. The language used had at times the over-emphasis which is common in devotional literature. But men spoke of realities which they had experienced. That their convictions were genuine their good works abundantly showed. Their faith was a power. Unfortunately it was joined to a cosmology, a theory of the origin of the world, which was fated to be destroyed by the progress of science. The ravages made in their scheme by geology were already ominous in the year 1823. The faith, it was felt, was in danger. Wisdom pointed to the acceptance of new scientific truths. But it is given to few to "greet the unseen with a cheer." So the Tractarians, the religious reformers who then arose, men of piety and ability, turned to the past for safety. They resuscitated Catholicism, a vast elaboration of Christ's teaching, derived from many sources during the decline of classical civilisation, and re-developed on the basis of Aristotle's philosophy during the Middle Ages. Their action was a jump out of the frying-pan into the fire, for the system which they embraced not only contained the cosmology now repudiated by educated men, but was also a synthesis of religious ideas of pagan origin combined with philosophic concepts now obsolete. English religion is still struggling with this burden; and, as I see the matter, no healthy reconciliation between science and organised Christianity is possible until it is cast aside. Let us admit that the Oxford Movement has done

good in adding beauty to worship. Among many clergy whom it influenced it produced a high standard of devotion and hard work. But in the background, ever more definite, is a conflict of ideas. When that conflict is over, a new phase of English religion will begin. As I have indicated, I believe that we shall regain the evangelicalism of men like Wesley and Simeon; but it will be combined with that outlook on the world which modern science has constructed.

Men of science can do much to help the community during the period of transition through which we are now passing. Their reverence for truth can be made an inspiration of especial value to pious souls. Among men of science there is the moral austerity without which the finest intellectual work is seldom, if ever, achieved. During the last generation, moreover, they have shown a steadily increasing sympathy with religion, an enhanced appreciation of the unique power of Christianity, at its best, to serve the human race, to foster spiritual progress while preserving spiritual freedom. I would urge all men of science whom my words may reach to take every opportunity to set forth their religious ideals, to show how in their own minds Christianity and science interact. Personally, I think it unreasonable to demand that their language should be orthodox. The great master of my thinking is Hort, the only theologian of the nineteenth century who began with a thorough scientific training. And Hort[1] said: "The more powerful preservation" of religious truth must come "by perilous use and perilous reform." The religious sincerity of able men with trained minds is of value in itself. And, I am

[1] F. J. A. Hort, *The Way, The Truth, The Life* (Macmillan 1897), p. 178.

convinced, the essentials of Christianity will survive by their own inherent strength. A faith worth having needs no artificial protection. Individually, each one of us may make mistakes: in the end truth will prevail through honest argument.

The great American divine, Phillips Brooks, laid down the principle to which all who speak of religion should be loyal. "Say nothing which you do not believe to be true, because you think it may be helpful. Keep back nothing you know to be true because you think it may be harmful." Already it is becoming more usual to ask laymen of eminence to speak on religious topics, to preach in places of worship. I eagerly desire the custom to spread. In the religious life of the nation we need all the contributions that religious men can make, and not least at the present time do we need the religious witness of men of science.

XV

THE DEITY OF CHRIST [1]

"In Him [Christ] dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." —Col. ii. 9.

Lately I have been getting a somewhat large number of letters from people whom I do not know: there have been, in fact, more such letters than I can attempt to answer. They bear witness to a widespread interest in the Christian religion coupled with no little perplexity and confusion. Naturally, they deal with all sorts of topics, but the subject which seems to be of paramount interest is the Divinity of Christ. It is quite clear that with regard to this matter the question of the Virgin Birth assumes an altogether disproportionate importance in the minds of many. The criticism of certain scholars and men of general ability has been diffused by popular journalists whose influence reaches far. So it is not uncommon for a man or woman to write: "I find myself unable to accept the Virgin Birth. Ancient literature is full of such stories. They were frequently invented to explain the origin of exceptional men or mythical heroes. Yet, unless one can believe the story, the Divinity of Christ has no intelligible meaning." I am here putting before you the substance of the usual objection. The form varies enormously. Some of my correspondents write with

[1] A Sermon preached in Westminster Abbey on Sunday, September 30th, 1923.

obvious sadness: they regret the decision to which they have been forced. Others rejoice in the overthrow of what they describe as a superstition vital to the continued existence of Christianity. Some add accusations of intellectual dishonesty: "You and other clergy, in asserting that Christ was Divine, preach lies."

Now, I do not propose to discuss the Virgin Birth to-day. I will merely say that there are stronger arguments for it as a biological possibility than most of my correspondents realise.[1] But I will take them on their own ground. Disregarding the Virgin Birth, what do we mean by—what reasons are there for believing in—the Divinity of Christ? Let me say at the outset that this is no new ground. Turn to the New Testament. Where do you find the most careful consideration of the uniquely intimate relation of Jesus Christ to God? In three places. First in the Epistles of St. Paul. Secondly, in the treatise by an unknown writer which we call the Epistle to the Hebrews. And, finally, in that great interpretation of the meaning of the Person and Work of Christ which was written under the influence of St. Paul's thought, and is called the Gospel according to St. John. This Gospel, which is almost the latest written of New Testament books, contains the most finished Christian theology to be found in the Bible. Yet St. Paul, the author of Hebrews and St. John the Evangelist never use, never even mention, the Virgin Birth. Plainly, then, the greatest and most authoritative of early Christian teachers did not think that belief in the Virgin Birth was essential to the doctrine of the Incarnation.

[1] As I have said elsewhere, to regard the Virgin Birth as "proving" the Incarnation is absurd.

The Incarnation: I am using a new word. What is its meaning? Simply this, that God revealed Himself in human form in Jesus of Nazareth. Now, of course, such a sentence, "God revealed Himself in human form in Jesus of Nazareth," is capable of many different shades of meaning. It is therefore often misunderstood. Some affirm that it means "Jesus was God." But the Christian Church has never made this unguarded statement. It has always insisted that Jesus was really and truly man. He had a human mind with, consequently, human limitations. To say that Jesus was God is to imply that He was omnipotent. But we read (Mark vi. 5) that He could do no mighty works in Nazareth because of their unbelief. Plainly, therefore, He was not omnipotent. Again, to say that Jesus was God is to imply that He was omniscient. But He said Himself (Mark xiii. 32) that He did not know when the end of the Age would come. His prayer (Luke xxii. 42), moreover—"Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me"—this prayer would have been a mere mockery if all the future were spread clearly before His eyes. The darkness of that future He could not pierce because, being man, He shared our limitations.

Let me then, in other words, repeat the true statement of Christian belief. The Incarnation means that in Jesus the Divine life was lived under human conditions.

But, you object, how can we know that such a fact is true; and if it is true, what is it worth to us? Has it really any significance, any value, for mankind to-day?

In answer to the first question I would insist on the commonly forgotten fact that spiritual truths must be spiritually discerned. If you wish to understand why

men believe in the Incarnation, you must not expect to get an explanation from science or from pure history. In the end it will be necessary to turn to history, and to the best history that critical scholarship can give. But, at the outset, you must examine the nature of the spiritual intuitions, powers, aspirations, which are still being developed in humanity. We must begin by admitting that we do not know directly what God is like ; but implanted in us are aspirations and qualities which tell us what God wishes men to become. From the aspirations which constitute our spiritual endowment we have to form our conception of God's nature. The upward spiritual surge of our being shows the purpose for which man was created. It reveals, more adequately than any other fact of the Universe, the nature of the activity of the Spirit of God. The sciences of physics and biology deal only with the lower preliminary stages of God's work on earth : we cannot therefore hope to find in them a satisfactory revelation of His character. They will disclose the machinery which He has used for His plan, but the ultimate purpose of that plan only comes into view as we examine man and the potentialities divinely implanted within him. In short, human perfection reveals what God desired when He made man.

Now, when we think of human perfection we instinctively turn to Jesus. When we try to make a picture of what man can be at his best we find that Jesus fills the framework. He has been studied more carefully than any other man. He has been exhaustively and sometimes bitterly criticised. But He holds His own triumphantly. He remains, for humanity, the ideal Man. So the Christian feels that it is impossible to separate belief in God from belief in Christ. The life

which we ought to live is that fashioned by the Spirit of God; and such a life was shown finely in Jesus of Nazareth. In Him, as St. Paul says (Col. ii. 9), there dwelt the fulness of the Godhead bodily. Our faith is (Rom. viii. 39) that "nothing can separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus." "The Spirit of life in Christ Jesus," to use another Pauline phrase (Rom. viii. 2) is God's revelation of Himself to humanity. This same Christ-Spirit shows His activity in all men of goodwill and especially in men whose greatness we feel to be consecrated to the service of righteousness and truth. If you ask how such men differ from Jesus, the answer is that He was unique in His unbroken consciousness of communion with God, and in His unswerving loyalty to the Divine Father.

No attempt to explain the Personality of Jesus has ever really succeeded. To solve the problem satisfactorily we should need a knowledge of God which we do not possess. But the thought of St. John contains a point of view to which personally I continually return. He took the idea of the Logos, by which is meant God's revelation of Himself to the thought and conscience of humanity; and he said that in Jesus the Logos was made flesh and dwelt among us. This Logos is both the Light and the Spiritual Life of men. To see it in perfection, in unsullied purity, we must turn to Jesus. Whatever is best in us will draw us to Christ, for there was in Him the Spirit which makes man a son of God. Christ constrains us; for the process by which we grow to the full measure of our spiritual stature is the work of the Logos Who appeared in Jesus. No good purpose can be served by pretending that this kind of thought is not difficult. Let us honestly admit that we cannot believe in the divinity of Christ unless

we accept the view of God which Jesus set forth in His teaching and substantiated by His life. Our reflection upon human existence and upon the Universe of which it is a part must lead us definitely to this view of God. If you hold that God is merely Power and Order, you will reject Christian belief. If, however, God is our Father, Jesus was uniquely His Son. Theologians separate the human Jesus from the Christ-Spirit, the Logos, manifested in and through Him. But such a refinement of theology, though useful as an answer to many crude criticisms of our belief, is not of practical importance to faith. The faith which we are concerned to spread throughout the world, the faith by which we need to transform our own lives, is that "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself" (2 Cor. v. 19). This belief, it is needless to say, is far more important than any abstract formula. It has a profound significance for us all. It implies that we must make Jesus our example—that we must follow Him if we would realise our potentialities. He points the way to the victory over animal instincts and passions; He shows us, in the old phrase, how to win salvation. The Incarnation is also an assertion that the Divine Life on earth led to the Cross. Suffering is not necessarily a punishment; it may be, and in all probability will be, the inevitable result of service to God, the natural consequence of doing God's will. The life of the Spirit on earth is not a life free from pain. Through struggle and anguish men enter the Kingdom of God. In the Incarnation we see God's self-sacrificing love winning men by evoking love, and this is the true doctrine of the Atonement.

But there is another aspect of the Incarnation which is too generally overlooked. In much Christian thought

there is a false pessimism, a belief that this world is hopelessly evil and life here merely a bitter preparation for the future. Such a view has naturally become more common of late because of the experiences through which we have passed during the last ten years. But if God deigned to dwell on earth, such pessimism is unthinkable; God's presence in Jesus meant that earthly life is in itself worth having; this life is the Father's gift. Our duty is not to decry it, nor to seek escape from it, but to use it, to fill it with love, joy and peace. In fact, we must remember the years which the Lord spent in Galilee before His mission. They were, as His teaching reveals, years rich in simple happiness, profoundly fruitful of spiritual understanding. In those years the human Jesus had His vision of the Kingdom of God and made His life on earth the beginning of life eternal. The same transformation by the Holy Spirit is, in lesser degree, possible for us all. We fulfil our earthly destiny in so far as we are not merely strengthened by the struggles but also enriched by the joys which earth affords. The world contains both good and evil; but, because it is God's world, there is in it more good than ill. The Incarnation tells us that God does not despair of it. Man may abuse his freedom, and, in so doing, create a brutal and sordid turmoil. But that the Divine Life should have been passed among men is a proof that God is still hopeful and we can share His confidence.

If you have followed me to-day, you will realise that I have attempted to set before you the Deity of Christ as a fact, not of theology, but of religion. When men approach it as a hard intellectual proposition, they lose its significance. The right method of approach is that indicated by the scientific study of human development.

We must start with our own religious life, the impulses within us that lead us to search for goodness and truth. We must then, by comparing man as he is now with man as he was ages ago, form an idea of what he is destined to become ; and, by this means, we must realise God's purpose, God's nature. Then, in the light of our own religious experience, and of the perfected ideal of which it yields a blurred suggestion, we must turn to Jesus. As we find in Him an unfailing consciousness of God, complete certainty, unswerving loyalty, we shall realise the meaning and accept the fact of His Divintiy. He will become the religious centre of our life, One through whom we know God, in whom we see God. So gradually the truth of Hort's saying grows upon us : " Belief in Christ is not a supplement to belief in God, but the only sure foundation for it. Belief in God is not a supplement to other beliefs, but the only bond of their coherence and trustworthiness." Religion, in fact, must work through Christ to God ; and in God, as thus reached, we find the source and purpose of our creation, the reason why we are here.

XVI

NEW KNOWLEDGE AND OLD BELIEFS [1]

I WOULD at the outset thank you for the honour you have done me in asking me to speak to you to-day, and I would assure you that I reciprocate the friendliness of which your invitation is a sign. It might, perhaps, have been expected that I should take this opportunity of discussing how we might reach that reunion for which I have a great longing. But I am ignorant of the exact state of the formal conversations which still continue between our respective leaders. Moreover, I do not believe that any negotiations will reach a successful issue until the clergy and leading laity in the Anglican and Evangelical Free Churches clearly realise the nature of the forces which are obliterating the old lines of cleavage. Why do our differences seem to some of us non-essential? Why have old controversies lost their edge? The reason, surely, is that we have all passed into a new thought-world. We no longer breathe the theological atmosphere of the seventeenth century, or even of the nineteenth. Some of the assumptions on which our ancestors based their systems are discarded. Arguments formerly used with confidence on both sides now seem to us invalid. We are perplexed by problems by which our forefathers were not troubled. Before

[1] An Address delivered at the Annual Meeting of the Metropolitan Free Church Federation on Monday, January 21st, 1924.

us all is the great question of how to harmonise new knowledge and old beliefs. Some readjustment has become imperative. We are passing through a period of transition; and whether we admit it or not, we share the birth-pangs of a new era. Our travail of mind and spirit may and must produce controversy; but it results from the same set of causes. Because the new intellectual environment constrains us all, old disputes are seen to be minor matters—often mere accidents of history. Because we feel the same pressure of new truths of science, history, and scholarship, a natural sympathy has been established between many who are nominally separated. And our ecclesiastical statesmen are wise in seeking to use the present opportunity of creating unity out of common interests and needs.

Within most Christian communions a strongly marked divergence of standpoint now shows itself; and this divergence is usually far more important than the divisions which separate the communions themselves. I refer, of course, to the antithesis between Modernism and Traditionalism. In the English Church it is typified by the opposition between Dean Inge and Lord Halifax. In the Protestant Episcopal Church of America, Bishop Lawrence of Massachusetts is on one side and the authors of the recent Pastoral Letter on the other. In the Roman Church fifteen years ago Tyrrell and Pius X. were protagonists. In the Wesleyan Church I might point to the differences of outlook between—dare I say it?—the Professors at Handsworth and Dr. Dinsdale Young. Among American Presbyterians it appears in the conflict between Dr. Fosdick and those who have recently indicted him for heresy. Everywhere the Liberal

arouses Conservative opposition. The leaders of reconstruction are made to feel the strength of the forces of reaction.

In this country, fortunately, we have escaped the worst consequences of the tension. There have been none of those heresy trials or excommunications which settle nothing. Tyrrell, I may remind you, was condemned from Rome. I would urge that, in our different communions, we must use all our influence to prevent the use of legal bludgeons. Argument and reason, not passion and force, must be our weapons. It is most interesting to notice that wise Americans envy our avoidance of processes of law. In an American episcopal journal, published three weeks ago, I read: "Neither in the Church nor outside of it is there in America such tolerance as there is in England. We have in our social life nothing analogous to the freedom of utterance allowed from Hyde Park soap-boxes; nor have we in the Episcopal Church any freedom analogous to that of the pulpits in the Anglican Church." Whether we be Modernists or Traditionalists, we must pray that such toleration may continue.

There are, as we all know, among the Traditionalists two parties—the Fundamentalists and the Catholics. Needless to say, I accept the ordinary titles without necessarily allowing that they represent legitimate claims. The Fundamentalists are the heirs of a narrow Protestantism; and by using the term "narrow" I wish strongly to emphasise that their outlook lacks the breadth of the great Reformation leaders, such as Erasmus, Colet, Luther, Hooker. Catholics, on the other hand, find themselves steadily driven by circumstances to the system of the modern

Roman Church. Hereditary enemies though Fundamentalists and Catholics are, they have much in common. Both traditionally are committed to the plenary inspiration of the Bible. Each uses isolated texts to prove its contentions. Neither perhaps nowadays would speak with old-time confidence of Biblical infallibility. Still, it is well to remember as regards Catholicism that[1] " All that the Fathers of the Church have said as to the inerrancy of General Councils and of sacred traditions is as nothing to what they have said as to the inerrancy of those classical pages of tradition which we call the Bible." Fundamentalists put " the integrity of Scripture " in the forefront of their faith, and a twentieth century Pope has said that all the books of the Bible were written by their reputed authors. The Fundamentalist, like the Catholic, insists on the truth of the Virgin Birth, and of the physical resurrection and ascension of Christ. His insistence follows from the fact that he has in his scheme a dualism of natural and supernatural. He holds that God intervenes by supernatural acts in the natural order ; and consequently rejects the view that God's spiritual activity is continuously and solely manifested through the regular physical order, whose sequences are the expression of the Divine will. Each, moreover, in accepting the doctrine of the Trinity, attaches to the Three Persons so much of the modern idea of personality that tritheism is with difficulty avoided. Each so emphasises the deity of Christ as to obscure His true humanity : the Logos practically takes the place of a human soul.[2] Each would affirm the personality of Satan.

[1] *Vide* George Tyrrell, *Mediævalism* (Longmans, 1908), p. 79.
[2] This is the heresy known as Apollinarianism.

The great difference between these representative Traditionalists is that, while Catholicism is permeated by sacramental magic, Fundamentalism relies on justification by faith. But such faith is not merely moral and spiritual dedication to God, nor is its justification the natural reward of following Jesus and thereby ascending with Him in heart and mind and soul to God. The Fundamentalist asserts that he is saved by appropriating the benefits of the substitutionary sacrifice of Christ. The Catholic holds that the sacraments work by themselves, *ex opere operato*; and the Fundamentalist really attaches an *ex opere operato* significance to the death of the Lord.

In view of the marked likeness between the Fundamentalist and Catholic positions, it is not surprising that the children educated in the one system not infrequently go over to the other.

Now Modernists can equally be divided into two main groups. On the one side there are the typically English Modernists of the Right. They preserve the Jewish—in fact, Christ's—idea of God. He is transcendental, with an independent existence, apart from the Universe which He created. His kingdom is the spiritual realm, non-spatial and probably extra-temporal. He works through men and in men; yet they are not divine, though through obedience to His will they can enter into communion with Him. And the reward of such communion is Eternal Life, which after death implies personal immortality. To the English Modernist the Incarnation is the fundamental fact of human history. However Jesus was born, God was manifested in Him as in no other human being. He lived the Divine Life on earth, so far as was possible under

the restrictions of human existence. Limited, necessarily, though His human knowledge was, His moral and spiritual insight was perfect. He is the Teacher of humanity for all time. His Spirit, still active on earth, leads men to the one goal of perfect truth and righteousness, to which the Spirit of God also guides men in their evolution. The work of the Holy Spirit must be discerned, not merely within the Church, but in the whole intellectual, moral and spiritual progress of humanity. The authority which discriminates true progress from false change is not external, a Pope, a Council, or a Synod ; but is the agreement of individual minds. Such agreement is reached through the working of conscience and reason ; and it *gradually* becomes an authority to which separate individuals yield. The English Modernist is not an agnostic, for he affirms that conscience is a gift of God, and that through reason we can discover truth.

As opposed to English Modernists we have Modernists of the Left, best typified by the men in the Roman Church whom Pius X crushed. Their principle of authority is the same as that of the Liberal Evangelicals, but they hold much less closely to the Christian tradition. In their thought of God they stress the idea of Divine Immanence until, with some, it becomes virtually pantheism. They think of God realising Himself in and through humanity, and especially in Jesus of Nazareth. In all men there is thus some Divine principle which survives death. But the doctrine of personal immortality is attenuated, and best expressed by the metaphor that the drop of water falls into the sea, contributing its iota of cleanliness or foulness. None the less, Christian morality, and, to some extent, Christian optimism, survive. " All things

work together for good." In the end God will come into His own, because Goodness, Beauty and Truth are the ultimate values of the universe—the goal of creative evolution. But the sharp antithesis of God and His sons, together with the permanence of personality—ideas on which Christ strongly insisted—are blurred in a mysticism which is sometimes richly devotional and sometimes apathetic.

Modernists of the Left often value Catholic ritual in worship. They recognise that it is older than Christianity, and this enables them to accept it as a means whereby man, at his present stage of evolution, satisfies certain instincts of worship. Being a natural outgrowth, in which specifically Christian ideas count for little, it can be naturally used by descendants of those by whom it was fashioned. Of both official and popular Catholic theology Left Wing Modernists are scornful. But emotional sympathy is often combined with intellectual contempt.

Needless to say, my analysis of the present state of Christian thought and feeling does not profess to be exhaustive. I have merely tried to indicate certain main lines of division. Within the different schools there are marked divergencies, and the lines of division are not rigid. So great is the present chaos that one might almost say, " Quot homines, tot sententiae."

What is to be the outcome of our confusion? It is most difficult to prophesy. We cannot say that traditionalism is bound to perish. It is true that neither form of it really harmonises with the modern outlook created by history, scholarship and science. But religious attitudes are amazingly persistent. If the more violent intellectual contrasts are smoothed away, mental distress quickly ceases. " The theology

of the average bigot," says the Dean of St. Paul's, " is of amazing crudity ; and he has not thought it out." The Copernican view of the Universe, though furiously resented for more than a century, established itself with little apparent effect upon crude thought. The view that man has been evolved from lower animals has meant to the present generation a similarly violent break with traditionalism. But it is winning its way to acceptance. The latest Fundamentalist platform that I have seen—a New York pronouncement—does not mention Adam or the Fall. And some Roman divines are asserting that the Decrees of Trent demand no more than a belief that humanity is descended from a single pair of transformed anthropoids.

You may say—and rightly—that the old view of miracles as breaches in natural law belongs to a supernatural dualism which modern science has made obsolete. You may say that Chiliasm cannot logically cohere with the principle of continuous evolution, which has become the postulate of our thinking : that to the medical psychologist demonology is a crude and unsatisfactory explanation of the facts of mental and spiritual pathology. You may also say—and rightly—that sacramental magic is irrational, and that research shows that the Catholic sacramental system is alien from the thought of Christ. But how long will it be before the mass of men pay heed to such truths ? These truths conflict with ingrained habits of thought, and so are quietly and persistently ignored. Sooner or later, clearer views will prevail. But are we safe from an irruption of intellectual barbarism ? Such barbarism corrupted the legacy of Greek thought of the Golden Age long before classical civilisation was

destroyed. And there are some signs that a similar period of decline is beginning in Western Europe and North America. Universal education, if it is of the right kind, may check such deterioration. But, in actual fact, such education as the masses now have has done harm. When men of ability, who belonged to or entered the ruling classes, were the sole source of ideas, a fairly high standard was developed. Superstition persisted; but even the clergy, who could use it to their profit, disliked the discredit of tolerating it. But now that everyone can read and write, certain superstitions are becoming respectable because they are so widely held. Crude thought is published. It attracts crude minds; and the men who, by superior mental power, ought to mould the thought of their time, are ignored. The spread of crude pseudo-Christian and non-Christian religious cults, which nowadays show deplorable vitality, is a most discouraging phenomenon.

Clearly, it is our stern duty to preserve and strengthen the great Christian tradition to which we are pledged. I take it that we must be, in some sense, Modernists; that is to say, we must not be content merely to avoid harsh contrasts between new knowledge and old beliefs. We must, in fact, have a really coherent system of religious thought. It is our duty so to preach Christ that our Gospel naturally belongs to the mental atmosphere breathed by well-educated men and women of lofty aspirations and religious zeal. By so doing we may not win immediate and extensive popular favour, but we shall be building on firm foundations. I am not suggesting that our preaching should be "high-brow." It must not. It should be simple, popular, direct. But our thinking must be

" high-brow," and the most difficult part of our task is to give simple form to accurate learning and clear thought. Christ Himself should be our example. He had a powerful and coherent theology, and He expounded it in language of matchless beauty and utter simplicity.

If, however, we are to be Modernists, what form must our Modernism take ? Are we to range ourselves with English Modernists or with Modernists of the Left ? Undoubtedly the existence of Left Wing Modernists accentuates conservative reaction. They have gone so far from the old Christian standpoint that men instinctively feel that they are developing a new religion which hardly deserves to be called Christian. I have at times heard sermons in Congregational churches in which a vague pantheism, or the entire absence of the sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life, has sent me away with a sort of weary chill. If this is all we can continue to offer men, so my thoughts have run, then I must be a Fundamentalist. I need a God, Who is our Father, Who rules the world and loves men with a father's love. For me the Universe is a sorry jest if I shall never " know even as also I am known." Think of all the time one has given to understanding this strange, vast Universe in which we are placed, in trying to discover its ultimate meaning and nature. If at the end I go hence to be no more, then have I spent my strength in vain. If I am the mere product of unrealised and unrealisable forces ; an automaton strangely misled to fancy himself free ; as it were, a bundle of sticks tied together for three score years and ten ; then most certainly I do not, and never can, know myself. God, freedom and immortality—such are my instinctive

religious convictions, rooted and grounded in the teaching of Christ.

But, it may be objected, this is all very well—yet reason and argument, not hope and desire, must be our guides. Is it not true that the concept of evolution leads naturally to pantheism, and that we cannot any longer regard the individual person as a permanent unit? I know full well that there are many reflective men whose thought takes this form. Probably such an attitude is far more prevalent than is generally acknowledged. Yet I believe it to be, like sacramental magic, an instinctive racial reaction from the teaching of Christ. We must expect such reactions in periods of mental unrest. When the power of tradition is broken, and we really think for ourselves, latent mental tendencies reassert their vitality. We believe that we are going forward; but we are really harking back to the dim past of the race. I would have you remember that we are, in the main, Aryans, whose forefathers were converted to Christ. I submit to you that Left Wing Modernism is not a necessary reconstruction of theology in the light of modern knowledge. It is far more fundamental—it is an Aryan reaction against Semitic religion. Similarly sacramental magic, which is the vital element in popular Catholicism, represents the Iberian conquest of Christianity. As I see the matter, if Christianity is to preserve its purity, we must fight alike against Aryan and Iberian intrusions. Pantheism and magical sacramentalism are the twin dangers, within and without, against which, in loyalty to Christ, we must struggle. Neither can claim to be essential to a modern religious synthesis. Magic is irrational, absurd. Pantheism does not give such a satisfactory view of

the universe and man's meaning within it as does Christ's teaching ; if for no other reason than that the moral struggle loses its predominant significance. Under it a divorce is permissible between religion and morality, those partners whom the Hebrew prophets joined together in the name of God. As against Left Wing Modernism, I assert a commonplace : Christianity rests on ethical monotheism, the gift of the Hebrew race to humanity. Reject it and you reject Christ.

Of course, the war has made the Churches somewhat afraid of this same ethical monotheism. During several unhappy years the idea that God demands righteousness and love was not popular. To protest against reprisals, to defend conscientious objectors, to plead for an agreed peace instead of the knock-out blow—these things were difficult. So the pre-prophetic God of Battles replaced ethical monotheism, and we are reaping our harvest. I remember a Free Church minister, who was accounted a " pacifist " like myself, once saying when we signally failed to get signatures to a manifesto, " Our people are mad. We opposed the Boer War, and never did we stand so high in popular esteem as when it was over. You, of the national Church, are bound to be patriotic." " But," he went on, " we ought to show spiritual independence. In the end we shall all have a heavy reckoning to pay for our desertion of Christ." What he said is true. The God of Christ is a jealous God. Ethical monotheism justifies itself somewhat intolerantly by the facts of human life.

I should like, before I end, to indicate my view as to the part played by racial habits of mind in the existing religious situation, and so to enforce my contention that, not the growth of knowledge, but the

release of latent instincts, is responsible for the most dangerous elements in the present religious chaos.

There is now general agreement that Europe has been peopled by human beings for probably at least a hundred thousand years. But the cave-men and the river-drift men of the glacial epochs appear to have died out. Our present civilisation is continuous with that of their successors, the Neolithic peoples who introduced domestic animals and cultivated plants and seeds. Some ten or twenty thousand years ago these fairly uniform races, small in stature, swarthy, long-headed, oval-faced, were spread alike over Western Europe and over most of the Mediterranean shores. We may call them Mediterraneans or Iberians. Their religious instincts led them to polytheism, irrational asceticism and sacramental magic. Some time before the beginning of written history invaders from Asia began to push them southward and westward. These invaders we call Aryans or Nordics. They were tall, blond, broad-headed, angular-faced people. They made the ancient civilisations of Greece and Rome. From them the highest castes in India are descended. To them the Celtic, Teutonic, Anglo-Saxon races belong. For three thousand years they have been leaders and rulers of Europe. Their religious thought is naturally mystical, stoical, pantheistic.

The population of Western and Southern Europe and of English-speaking North America is largely a mixture of Iberian and Aryan. Now racial habits of mind are extraordinarily persistent. Where the Iberian type prevails, as in Southern Ireland, Brittany, Spain and Southern Italy, Iberian religious instincts are strong. You get polytheism disguised as veneration due to the saints, irrational asceticism, as in enclosed

Carmelite convents, and the sacramental magic of the Mass. Where the Aryan stock is relatively pure, the Aryan outlook shows itself. Stoical agnosticism, together with mysticism which stresses Divine immanence to the verge of pantheism, expresses the natural religious temper. In European Christianity the Semitic outlook, Christ's view of the universe and valuation of human life, has always had to contend with Aryan and Iberian intrusions.

St. Paul and that follower of his whom we know as St. John were influenced by Greek, that is to say, by Aryan, thought. So in both we get an emphasis on mysticism and Divine immanence. "I am in My Father and ye in Me and I in you," is but one of many instances that might be adduced. The standard creeds are similarly products of Greek thinking. But the popular elements in Catholicism which gradually became dominant in the mediæval Church were Iberian: they came from the fertile primitive Mediterranean stocks. The Reformation was the Teutonic revolt against Iberian religion. The Reformers thought that they were returning to the primitive Gospel. In fact they returned to St. Paul and the standard creeds. It was a case of like seeking like. Roman Catholicism of the present day is Iberian religion veneered by Christianity. Modernism of the Left is a Christianised variant of the natural religious outlook of the Aryan races.

I myself would regard Pauline mysticism as a legitimate element in Christianity. I should also agree with him that faith is the operative principle of the sacraments; that Baptism and the Lord's Supper are not quasi-magical means of cleansing the soul. Yet I would insist that grave dangers attend any

extravagant development either of mysticism or of sacramentalism. In short, Christ and His teaching ought to be the centre of our faith. To the Gospel of the Kingdom of God and to the Lord of that Kingdom we must seek to be loyal. In the Message and the Messiah we have the revelation of God to man. I have no fear that either will ultimately fail to commend itself to humanity. Christ is increasingly the central figure in human history. His vision of the Kingdom is often imperfectly apprehended and sometimes barbarised, but none the less it endures and inspires. I unhesitatingly affirm that, in so far as we are true to Christ and His message, we are fellow-workers with God. In such loyalty we can fearlessly use new knowledge to purify faith; and we shall, in all our controversies and conflicts, be working for that unity in Christ of which we dream. But let us not be disappointed by delay. God works slowly. Man, as he is, has been in the making for something like a million years.

XVII

FAITH AND THE FUTURE [1]

"Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."—MATT. xviii. 20.

THESE words, which the author of the First Gospel records as a saying of our Lord, always seem to me to express with concise power Christ's teaching with regard to both Church and Sacraments. When men are gathered in Christ's name, when they join to seek the light of His understanding and the inspiration of His Spirit, He is with them. There is no exaggeration in this statement: our experience confirms its truth. We are strengthened in Christ when we meet to meditate upon the beauty of His life and the meaning of His death, when we test our spiritual needs and desires by His teaching, when we use our knowledge and mental powers to seek to know the Father with Whom He lived.

Our conference ends with worship in this church. Naturally at the meetings intellectual discussions have been prominent, for we met together to consider the relation between modern science and Christian belief. But none the less, ours has been emphatically a religious conference, a meeting in Christ's name. This aspect of our gathering passes *sub silentio*; one says little of the deepest things of the life of the Spirit

[1] A Sermon preached at the conclusion of the Modern Churchmen's Conference at Oxford, on Sunday, August 31st, 1924.

But it would be well if those, who read the necessarily imperfect summaries of Modernist thought which appear in the Press, could realise the religious earnestness which now, as in the past, has found expression in our private talks and semi-private worship. We have gathered together in Christ's name, and we have felt His presence among us.

What emerge as facts of dominant importance when we consider as a whole the papers, the discussions, and still more the spirit of the varied presentation of the scientific approach to religion? First and foremost, I would put the indestructibility of religion. In the varied heritage of humanity there is much to be deplored. War with its organised machinery is a menace to civilisation. Various types of superstition are as persistent as they are harmful. But the spiritual ideals of mankind are the source of human progress. And the religious outlook on human life which leads men to find in such ideals the expression of the ultimate nature of the universe, must and will endure. How can I summarise the religious attitude of mankind at its best? Briefly, we are the result not of chance but of Purpose. Thought is not a mere by-product of chemical activity, but a reality more valuable and not less durable than matter. We do not create spiritual values out of the needs of the social life, though we acknowledge that our needs lead us to see the importance of such values and to realise their fundamental place in the eternal scheme of things. It is true, moreover, that we are fashioned by our environment. Physically, mentally, even spiritually, we are products of earth's travail. But the process is not natural, if by the term "natural" we mean bred by chance out of chaos. Our evolution

has been designed. As we have been formed, so now we are taught and led, to serve an end. That end is soul-making, the creation of beings with spiritual understanding and aspirations, units worthy to share the life of the Highest.

Not only do I think that we may conclude that such a generalised religious outlook—if I may so term it—is indestructible but, as it seems to me, we have solid grounds for believing that the Christian faith will continue to be a persuasive inspiration to humanity. Naturally I mean the Christian faith in its essentials, apart from developments of thought and cult by which men have sought to elaborate, at the risk of obscuring, its distinctive message. But I would contend that belief in God as Christ revealed Him, acceptance of the facts of human freedom and responsibility, an interpretation of man's existence which demands the certainty of personal immortality for those who seek to serve God—these essentials are not weakened by our growing knowledge. We can go further. Has God left Himself without a witness among men? The abiding influence, the compelling attractive power of Jesus the Christ, forbid us to think so. Jesus in His life and teaching was God's revelation of Himself. Mystical experience of the highest kind may be rare; but he would be a bold, and I think a foolish, man who would say that it is becoming rarer as humanity progresses. And, when the flash of mystical insight comes, it reveals Christ as supremely endowed with understanding of God. The way He sought and found God in prayer and meditation; His intuitive certainty of God's nature and purpose; the unfailing perfection of His ethical judgments—all point to the richest kind of spiritual excellence, to

a communion with God unsurpassed among the sons of men. Jesus was more than an ethical teacher; His witness to the moral law was a part of His Divine understanding. And for that reason Christianity will always be more than a moral code; it is a religion, a response to and an interpretation of those spiritual struggles that sharply separate us from the animals; it is a light to men who feel compelled to search amid darkness because something within them, some kinship with the Divine, draws them on.

I do not think that any of us here are likely to talk in a disparaging fashion of "mere morality." We know that religion without morality is a curse and snare. It has taken millennia to free religion from sexual vice. To free it from the intolerance which breeds cruelty and falsehood is a task so difficult that by it many a thoughtful man is dismayed. Much of the hostility to religion which we can observe to-day is at bottom hostility to the vices which shelter under religious institutions. Christ's condemnation of the Scribes and Pharisees was not a condemnation of Judaism, but of unethical developments within it. He found the accredited teachers of His day disloyal to the faith which they professed. Now such painful truths we must not ignore. None the less, as it seems to me, the only sound basis for morality is spiritual understanding. A man's life is fashioned by the religion which he holds—and that, I need hardly say, may be vastly different from the religion which he professes. Our actual belief in the nature and purpose of the Creator of the universe is the ultimate basis of conduct. To some, expediency may seem to be the determining principle; but most men at times realise that loyalty to some absolute standard has been the

motive for action; and the success of the principle of "the higher expediency" witnesses to the fact that the Universe is ultimately a God-centred unity. There is, in truth, in the ordinary experience of men much more to justify the Christian outlook than they often admit. The appeal of Christ to men—its increasing appeal to the best men among the more advanced races of mankind—is not an accident. Our response to Him arises from the fact that we are what we are, or rather that our aspirations are what they are. God, in making us for Himself, has also made us for Christ. Notoriously we are grossly imperfect. Animal instincts and spiritual desires create within us a tension, a condition of instability, from which we long to escape. But there is no escape from spiritual struggle or from the dangerous obligations of righteousness. So Jesus showed conclusively in His life and death. So men learn as they go through life. Christianity, in so far as it is true to its Founder, remains psychologically sound. Speaking for myself, then, I say boldly that religion is not only a most necessary but also an indestructible element in man's heritage; and that the religious outlook on the Universe which is centred on Christ becomes more and not less reasonable as our knowledge and spiritual understanding are increased and purified.

Such are the conclusions which seem to me to be established by our present Conference and by the growing body of opinion of which it is representative. Two subordinate conclusions seem to me worthy of emphasis. First, it is useless for religious teachers to ignore or to minimise the fact that there has been, as a result of scientific discovery and speculation during the last hundred years, a vast change in man's

knowledge of the Universe of which he is a part. The change began when Copernicus displaced the earth from its imagined position as the centre of creation; it was emphasised when the audacious speculations of Giordano Bruno led him to the stake. The genius of Newton, as we all know, turned the hypothesis of Copernicus into demonstrable fact. But until recently the new astronomy, though formally accepted, remained largely unrelated to popular religious belief, and had surprisingly little influence on the imagination even of educated men. It is only since, within the last generation, astronomers have explored the depths of space, and have shown our solar system to be part of a vast aggregate of hundreds of millions of moving suns, that earth's insignificance has been generally realised. Physically the earth is a mere atom in a complicated structure of inconceivable vastness. Man lives in time, but the whole of the Christian era is but the tick of an astronomical clock. If we are to measure human life in terms of space and time, man is quite infinitesimal. To some these are profoundly disquieting facts. In us here they arouse no misgivings, for we are thus driven to the conclusion that man's spiritual aspirations and achievements, his mental powers, his moral understanding and ethical victories, are the only things that matter. These constitute his sole worth in the infinite scheme. And all the other transformations of outlook which modern science has forced upon us point in the same direction. Man's body has no permanence; chemistry has put an end to belief in a resurrection of this present flesh of ours—it is the spirit which will have immortality, for human life is an absurdity unless man's personality, in so far as it is made fit for communion with God by

putting on Christ, is destined for Eternal Life. The whole process of human creation has been the slow transformation of the merely animal by the growth of spiritual understanding. Man we now know to be a cousin of the apes. But God has separated man from the other products of earth's teeming womb by giving him power to share Divine attributes. Not by reason of his origin, but because he has come to know and serve God, man stands apart. The atoms of matter combine and re-combine; possibly there are regions of space where they are made and disintegrated. Out of some of them it appears that life has taken its beginnings; and living things change, evolve and disappear. From the seething turmoil man has been produced. He too will disappear from the earth when our sun grows dark. But he has spiritual consciousness. God has made us for Himself. We can share in the eternal values of the Universe; and thus we are sons of God.

I need not insist upon the far-reaching character of the recent change of outlook. From an earth-centred Universe we have passed to a knowledge that the earth is a minor planet of one among some two thousand million suns. From belief in a special creation six thousand years ago we have come to picture life evolving on this earth for a hundred million years. Time and space have widened out till we are lost in immensities. The local Heaven and Hell of mediæval fancy have passed away. And, because of our entire inability to imagine the existence of consciousness apart from some living material organism, belief in the reality of a future life has for the mass of men become increasingly difficult. So we witness such phenomena as the growth of

spiritualism. Science must give back what science has taken away. Evidence for survival may be weak; the religious value of such as is offered may be of the slightest; but a drowning man will catch at a straw. The different pseudo-scientific cults and the so-called systems of new thought which now abound testify to the enormous confusion in religious belief to which the spread of popular science has led. Because men imagine that Christianity is tied to an obsolete scientific *Weltanschauung* they seek for some alternative. We must not merely deride the pathetic ignorance which is thus shown. Men of science have created a new world. It is their duty to co-operate with philosophers and theologians and to show the place which religious faith must have in the new order. No one who has attended the present Conference can fail to perceive how naturally the essential doctrines of Christianity cohere with the modern outlook. The setting in which Christian dogma has been placed in the past is obsolete. But it is the background of traditional theology rather than its fundamental principles that we need to set aside. If only the ideas which have found expression at this Conference could be given popular form, the end of the present painful period of religious unsettlement would be in sight.

Side by side with the certainty that the new knowledge of humanity cannot be ignored by religious thinkers I would put a second conclusion which our Conference has emphasised. We cannot discover in the past that perfect scheme of faith which we instinctively desire. Two opposite tendencies naturally show themselves at any time of popular religious unrest. There are, on the one hand, attempts at reconstruction which, when made by the ill-equipped,

are usually both extravagant and feeble. On the other hand we are offered the comfortable assurance that some synthesis or record of the past is miraculously perfect. Thus to-day we find conservatives dividing themselves into two classes: those who maintain still that the Bible is inerrant and those who cling to the belief that a perfect deposit of faith has been preserved by the Catholic Church. The necessity of defining this deposit shows itself in a growing tendency to exaggerate the value of the work of St. Thomas Aquinas. Now, of these two conservative tendencies, veneration for the Bible is the more reasonable. Until quite modern times the Bible was treated as substantially infallible by all Catholic theologians. The system of Aquinas is practically based on this assumption. The discoveries which make it impossible for us to claim that the Bible is free from error equally forbid us to make a similar claim for any past synthesis of dogma. Thus the extreme Fundamentalist and the Catholic positions are equally unsatisfactory. The ridicule with which Erasmus assailed scholastic theology has not lost its edge. Were Erasmus alive to-day the knowledge of our new Renaissance would afford him further material with which to barb his criticism. We have, in fact, passed away from mediæval thought. We may admire its subtlety; but many of the assumptions of mediæval thinkers are quite obsolete. So, as I see the matter, the ark of fancied safety to which our Catholics flee is even less likely to avail against the deluge than the simple reliance on the Bible which served their forefathers. Modern Churchmen replace simple reliance on the Bible by an intelligent and critical appreciation of its value. They are, of all Christians, the

most earnest students of Scripture; and they claim that accurate study, so far from chilling devotion, strengthens faith in Christ. The Bible gives us the historical basis of Christianity. In it we have the record of what was truly a Divine Revelation, of the greatest religious movement of ancient times which culminated in the appearance of Jesus Christ. Just as mediæval thinkers took that record and, in the light of their knowledge and thought, shaped Christian dogma, so we to-day must proceed. We know that a reasonable system of faith and thought cannot be derived from the theories peculiar to Anglo-Catholicism. The earnestness and zeal of Anglo-Catholics make only the more pathetic the fact that their system is a hybrid bred by fear in the Victorian era. The Liberal theology of which its founders were afraid is worthily represented in this Conference; it expresses, as we believe, the invincible march of the Spirit of God. In Latin Catholicism the ancestral sacramental paganism of the Mediterranean races is veneered by Christian sentiment. To attempt to graft it on to the English Church is hopeless. The Englishman will not lean on the priest and the sacraments even though he be given that permission to sin boldly which Tyrrell, himself a Jesuit, accused the Jesuits of allowing. Therein our Englishman, though he may be a bad Catholic, is a good Christian, for it is certain that Christ gave neither the command nor the permission. I see no reason to believe that Jesus would have found fault with our national habit of mind which puts the consecration which comes from hunger and thirst after righteousness before the most splendid ceremonial that man can devise. God consecrates. He is limited by no mechanism. Our Church order is

seemly and useful, but has no exclusive spiritual significance. The man in whom the spirit of Christ is active is Christ's minister.

Let me repeat that English Modernists, as represented by this Conference, are wrongly accused of disparaging the Bible. On the contrary they affirm the unparalleled spiritual excellence of the Revelation which it contains; and they seek to combine the Revelation with modern knowledge, to give a reformulation of the Christian faith adequate to the mental, moral and spiritual needs of our own day. In so far as English Modernists have this aim, they can claim to be more truly Evangelical and more truly Catholic than any other party within the Church. They are Evangelical because they accept the Gospel of Christ as their religious standard, and not some competing theology or semi-pagan variant of Christianity. They are Catholic in that, like all the greatest Catholic theologians of the past, they seek to make a system of faith by combining the fact of Christ with their own knowledge and spiritual experience. I cannot doubt that the future is with them. Misrepresentation and misunderstanding they cannot hope to escape. The pioneer who seeks to alter established ideas must expect conservative opposition; and of all ideas, those associated with religion are most tenaciously held. But, in the long run, truth must prevail. We must not break with the past lightheartedly, but because "soberly, discreetly and advisedly" we seek truth in Christ by the help of the fuller knowledge of His Universe which God has of late given to mankind. A century hence the majority of Christians will accept the general standpoint taken at this Conference, and be surprised that at the

beginning of the twentieth century it aroused so much disquiet. Differences of worship, of Church organisation, and, in minor matters, of belief, will persist among Christians. They exist at the present Conference. Men are not made to one pattern. There is no reason to believe that God likes uniformity. But Christians are imperfectly loyal to their Master unless in Him they can find unity. By loyalty to the truth and a steady effort to be worthy of Christ we ought to be able to show men how to create out of its present discordant elements the Church Universal of which we dream.

XVIII

OUR PRESENT NEED OF THE SPIRIT OF CHRIST [1]

"He that sitteth on the throne said, Behold, I make all things new."—Rev. xxi. 5.

I WISH to speak to you to-day on the world's need, our need, of Christ. Since the war we have been living through a period of reaction and disillusion. Throughout Europe there continues to be profound moral disorder; there is also deep-seated mental and spiritual disquiet. Thirty years ago, when those now middle-aged were young, civilisation seemed stable. There was much religious unrest: it was a natural consequence of the great additions to human knowledge won during the nineteenth century. But everybody expected that steady progress, alike political, social and moral, would continue. No one dreamt that a great era in human history might be drawing to an end. Yet now men wonder. We remind ourselves, gloomily, that other civilisations in the past have collapsed: they were, as a French writer has said, "no less beautiful, no less fragile, than our own." To-day we are forced to recognise that over a great part of Europe culture has decayed. There are ominous signs that in this country barbarised thought has become more common. It is certain that economic ruin in Russia has practically uprooted civilisation.

[1] A Sermon preached at Christ Church, Victoria Street, London, on Sunday, March 29th, 1925.

In Germany and Austria the educated class has endured terrible privations. Europe is only slowly recovering from malnutrition, famine, disease, despair. And the mental and spiritual upset of the threatened catastrophe is still with us. Loss of faith in the goodness and wisdom of God our Father; recrudescence of superstition; greed of pleasure; we may be unconscious of the origin of these manifestations of spiritual disorder. But they are signs of deep-seated psychological distress of which the war was the cause. The war was produced by and has bred what has well been called the spirit of Anti-Christ. Envy, hatred, jealousy, fear, selfishness between nations and people and classes and individuals—these led to the calamity from which came our present decadence. Unless we can replace the spirit of which they are born by the Spirit of Christ, there is little hope for the world. Must we give up hope? Is religion powerless? Are our churches, as some social critics suggest, picturesque survivals with no essential significance in human affairs? I personally am quite sure that true religion—the Christian Religion—is neither powerless nor effete. But I am equally sure that the churches must present Christ's teaching in its essential purity, free from the sacerdotalism and obscurantism with which it is too often combined, if they are to win the respect of thoughtful men.

The Christian Faith will hold its own because the principles of Christ are necessary for human welfare and because those principles rest upon the religious view of the Universe which constitutes His revelation.

Think for a few minutes of the civilisation built up during the nineteenth century. This earth had never seen its like before. All the nations had become

inter-dependent. Their trade, commerce and finance were part of a single whole. Bankers had devised a marvellously intricate and delicate machine which adjusted, throughout practically the whole world, the balance and supply of food and of manufactured articles. Under the stimulus of this ingenious adjustment the population of Europe trebled: it became, in fact, dangerously large. Only so long as the machine of world-trade and finance worked smoothly was the situation safe. That was why the world's financial magnates dreaded war; why enthusiasts said that such a disastrous absurdity ought to be impossible. It was obvious that the economic machine was bound to get out of gear when once the spiritual basis upon which it rested was injured. Sometimes men say that finance has no soul. But we know it to be untrue. The success of any kind of intercourse between men depends upon the motives, the spiritual forces which govern those men. And our economic world-order rested upon trust, co-operation and good will. It is because the growth of these motives and ideals has been impaired that the economic basis of our civilisation has been so grievously imperilled. We all admit that human life has both sacred and secular aspects. Yet we cannot separate them as sharply as men imagine. Religion and economics, ethics and politics are closely inter-related. If a man cannot live decently he cannot be religious. If he is obliged to live in destitution, physical misery will destroy his spiritual faculties. The material and spiritual well-being of humanity depend one on the other. The economic perils through which we have passed are ultimately due to spiritual disease. When the social structure of a people is destroyed by economic disaster,

religion is crushed by misery. A true revival cannot come unless it be not only economic but also religious. Men improve their own status by improving that of their neighbours. They find themselves individually happier when they begin to bear, as in every civilised community men must bear, one another's burdens. Trust, co-operation and good will, in other words the Spirit of Christian brotherhood—these prove their value as effective agents of social health; and so Christ's teaching justifies itself by the facts of human life.

I would urge, at this point, that all of us should distrust extravagant politico-economic adventures. What is called in Socialist parlance Capitalism does produce social injustice. We admit and deplore the fact. But so far human thought has failed to devise any successful alternative to it. It has been created by a long process of experiment. It is the foundation of modern trade, industry and finance. It has consequently brought vast populations into existence who may resent its working; but, as the Russian experiment shows, they starve without it. We must, especially at a time of profound unrest like the present, beware of impracticable idealism.

Because we dislike many results of our present economic system we should be foolish to destroy it until we have something better and *workable* to put in its place. He who would risk destroying two-thirds of the population of Europe in the hope of creating in the future a better social order shows the type of thought which has been well described as "the remorseless logic of the undergraduate." Capitalism is not, in itself, hostile to the Spirit of Christ; it cannot, in fact, function successfully unless some qualities

of His Spirit are present. The economic machine, as everyone admits, would work more successfully, with fewer jars and jolts, if Christ's influence were more pervasive. When justice is tempered by mercy and bargains are altered through sympathy; when between employers and employed there is a mutual respect and a mutual feeling of helpfulness; when humane motives are strong; when, in fact, the ethics of the Gospel are not wholly forgotten—then our social order is most healthy. What we need to attempt to-day is to extend the range of Christian idealism within the economic order which we have inherited. Let us seek to transform that order from within. We certainly cannot get outside it unless we break it to pieces, and that way leads to anarchy.

You may object that the world has drifted towards anarchy, and, that capitalism was the evil genius of the process. Undoubtedly trade rivalries have been used to intensify international suspicion. Financial groups can, and do, manipulate public opinion for base ends. But such abuses are rendered possible by the existence of national hatreds, jealousies and fears. They would fail if the leading democracies of the world could learn the wisdom of magnanimity, if they could forgive and forget, if they could resolve in the Spirit of Christ to elicit goodwill by showing goodwill.

Statesmen are handicapped when the peoples whom they represent are morally inert. In fact, the source of our ills to-day is not an economic device called Capitalism but the Spirit of Anti-Christ.

Can we exorcise this spirit? I confess that I can see no hope of moral progress except in a religious revival which shall fire men with simple and sincere

enthusiasm for the teaching of Jesus. It is high time that the Christian Churches in general, and the Church of England in particular, should justify faith in Jesus by showing the world's need of His principles. Of what use are sacramental superstitions and liturgical frivolities in our present distress? Of what use is the religious obscurantism which sets religious prejudice against modern knowledge? We cannot make a new world by presenting men with old clothes. Jesus to-day stands out of the pages of history as a Modern of the Moderns because He had a message *for all time*, a message of vital importance to our own age. If we preach that message we preach the Christ. If we half bury it under an elaboration of ritual and ecclesiasticism we leave men free to doubt whether we really believe the Gospel of the Son of Man.

It is natural that the churches should at the present time shun the naked truth. During the war, in all churches, with the honourable exception of the Society of Friends, there was a marked disposition to ignore such principles of the Gospel as were inconvenient. In silence the churches condoned evil deeds. They did not set their influence steadily and firmly to overcome the passions engendered by the conflict. Their members narrowed, and sometimes their preachers travestied, the teaching of Christ.

The state of Europe to-day shows the truth of Edith Cavell's great and truly Christian saying: "Patriotism is not enough." We can go further and say that the combination of patriotism and purity, often regarded by Christians with especial favour, is not enough. Patriotism is a Christian virtue, if it be neither bitter nor exclusive and if it leads men in a desire for national well-being to spread the temper

of Christ throughout their Motherland. Personal purity is undoubtedly a part of the Christian ideal, but a self-satisfied purity is not infrequently joined to a narrow intolerance such as Jesus never manifested. Remember, moreover, that Roman paganism produced the Vestal Virgins in whom religion was centred on national pride and sexual purity. But Christianity is the search for, and life in, the Kingdom of God. Of that Kingdom Christ said to the ecclesiastical rulers and religious teachers of His time that, "the publicans and harlots shall go in before you." The publicans were unpatriotic Jews who collected taxes for the hated conqueror. The harlots may have been little worse but were certainly no better than the fashionable *divorcées* of our time. Christ's words are a warning against a tendency—too common in ecclesiastical circles at the present time—to narrow the Christian ideal. The Kingdom of Christ needs broad foundations. It rests on justice, forgiveness, mercy, temperance, patient service, hope, faith and love. These things are the expression of the Spirit of Christ. Do not confound that Spirit with the spirit of ecclesiasticism with which religious people tend to confuse it. The world has no need of any of the combinations of piety, superstition and formalism which are too often presented as the Christian Faith. Oh! the amazing constructions with which men replace the Spirit of Christ! One group will say: "we have an infallible book well-nigh two thousand years old; and it does not contain a single mistake in science or history, theory or fact." Naturally, if they are polite, men say "Remarkable" and go on their way. Others come forward: "we belong to an infallible Church which, during a very

chequered existence has never made a mistake in theology or morality." Naturally men turn aside and go on their way. Others again assure us that the British peoples are the descendants of the lost Ten Tribes and that all the promises of the Old Testament reveal blessings to be showered upon us, probably in this generation. Naturally men turn aside and go on their way. And others will explain that they have a service of singular value for piety and virtue if it be held at eight o'clock in the morning, but unthinkable at eight o'clock in the evening. Naturally men turn aside and go on their way. It's all so unlike Jesus—Jesus, Whose religion was so much a part of Himself that He was not afraid to jest: Jesus, Whose mockery of folly and exposure of unreality were so brilliant, so quick and so modern. The citadel of Jewish ecclesiasticism was the Sabbath. It fell before the words, "The Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath." As the years go by I am ever more impressed by the greatness of Jesus. During the war some of us tried to draw up prayers which German Christians could also say. None equalled the Lord's Prayer. And, when one is depressed by the perversions of Christianity which abound, one has only to return to Jesus in the synoptic Gospels to feel a real sense of elation. "Surely this Man was God's Son." We lack the simplicity of true faith in Christ. Active loyalty to Him, which will result from the disentangling of His message from accretions to it which are not seldom substitutes for it—such is supremely our need to-day.

Often enough men and women ignore the Christian Faith because they do not feel that the churches will lead them to the Kingdom of God. They do not

wish to enter societies which seem to shelter moribund superstitions and to exclude the Holy Spirit of Truth. It is natural. None the less, Christianity must be organised. We must form societies to preserve and spread Our Lord's message. And we need men and women, young and old, inspired by hope and love to enter the Churches and re-fashion them so that the Spirit of Christ finds its dwelling-place within the old walls. Arid theology, impossible pretensions, blindness to new truth, superstitions—these are with us to-day in the Churches. They are likely to remain as long as clergy and ministers are not recruited from the best of our young men. But the present decay is not permanent. Already, as I believe, religion among us is beginning to reveal its enduring vitality. The very urgency of our need of the Spirit of Christ will cause its power to burst forth anew. As revival comes, the Churches will feel and respond to the quickening breath of the Spirit. Men cannot do without Christ. Something in their very nature makes them search for the Kingdom of God. The devil may seem to rule the world, but, in fact, Christ reigns. The Kingdom of God is among you and within you, here and now. "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." "Behold, I make all things new."

XIX

RELIGION AND PUBLIC HEALTH [1]

"Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."—ST. MATT. vi. 33.

I VIEW with pleasure the fact that the delegates of the present Congress of the Royal Institute of Public Health should, as a part of their programme, have included a religious service in the Parish Church of Brighton. We do not regard their attendance here as a compliment to the Church of England. We know that many give private allegiance to other Christian communions. But we may fairly assume that the organisers of the Congress have wished to emphasise that their work has a religious value and a religious basis, and that this attitude is widely shared by the delegates in general. The health of the community and the problems which arise in connexion therewith demand the close attention of all religious teachers; and moreover religious enthusiasm in the widest sense of the words inspires the finest efforts put forth by officials charged with the care of public health.

The connexion between religion and public health is, in fact, much closer than many imagine. The life of man is a unity into which there enter all the factors, physical, moral, and spiritual, which combine in human

[1] A Sermon preached before the Congress of the Royal Institute of Public Health, in Brighton Parish Church, on Whitsunday, May 31st. 1925.

civilisation. In particular the physical conditions under which we live profoundly affect our ethical aspirations. Dirt and disease injure the spirit no less than the body. Our ideals and the religious view of life with which they are so closely associated—from which indeed they often spring—are in no small degree the product of the environment in which we are placed. Man's attempt to make life tolerable for himself and his fellows has created civilisation. The urge to purify and beautify human life comes from within man. It is, as the Christian affirms, the gift of his Creator. But the vision of a world made perfect, which is the source of human aspiration, is dulled or destroyed when conditions are such that the decencies and sanctities of life become impossible. Every social worker knows that when men and women are crowded in insanitary houses their morale is destroyed; that moral degradation follows physical squalor. It is also happily true that human beings of exceptional character will break away from sordid surroundings. Let religion touch them with its magic wand and they will lift themselves above the slime where they may have been bred, and show the creative energy through which all social progress comes. But every slum clergyman knows that men and women of this type are rare. They are the salt of his flock; but, he will tell you, as the years pass they too pass to healthier surroundings. Sooner or later the slum knows them no more.

The religious sense—the belief that goodness, beauty, and truth express the nature of the Creator to Whom man must be loyal—is inherent in humanity. If opportunity is favourable it will show itself and be an inspiration to good wholesome living. But it can be

degraded and atrophied by sordid surroundings: and religious work among those who have lost it is a well-nigh hopeless task.

Hence the general improvement of social conditions is of vital importance to religious progress. Thus it is necessary to seek continuously to improve the mechanism of a complex civilisation such as our own if we would strengthen its spiritual basis. Yet it remains true that those who have charge of the mechanism must be inspired by spiritual ideals if their work is to be in the highest degree fruitful.

Our civilisation has been transformed in the last hundred years by public hygiene. Without our modern developments of water supply, sewers and sanitation, industrial and urban England could not exist. The stench of even small towns in Elizabethan England was an offensive witness to conditions which led to an appalling rate of infantile mortality. If we had to return to such conditions three-fourths of the population of this land would be swept away. Medicine and hygiene have made possible a new type of civilisation. But the new world thus called into existence has problems as difficult as any which mankind has yet had to meet. To put the matter in a nutshell: human welfare is now menaced by human fecundity. Civilisation is in danger of being choked by its waste products. The growth of our population has been such that vast masses are deprived of the uncramped freedom necessary to a healthy existence. It is said by experts that population seldom falls below saturation point for much more than a generation. From this statement some conclude that there will always be a large residuum in every population consisting of individuals who can only just manage to

exist. Now if such a view is correct, healthy social progress is a vain dream. The inferior racial stocks will always multiply at the lowest possible level at which life can be lived. Those who know conditions which are common in the centres of our large cities, and those who have studied the increase of the feeble-minded, often take this pessimistic view. They regard the great housing schemes of our present social legislation as mere palliatives. The good effect of such schemes will be speedily swamped by the fecundity of inferior stocks content with a level of existence which is, and must continue to be, a blot upon our civilisation. When we examine such contentions we are forced to allow that inferior stocks are not now eliminated by the harsh conditions which were common throughout England until less than a century ago—conditions which humane sentiment, and especially Christian sentiment, will no longer tolerate. Therefore the question arises as to whether the social conscience is not now conniving at racial degeneration. The better stocks among us increase slowly, if they increase at all, whereas seventy years ago they were probably increasing almost as rapidly as the general population.

Now I do not think that the change from large to small families in the middle classes is to be impatiently condemned. Most certainly it does not correspond to any general deterioration of family life. The children are at least as well cared for; parents are willing to make at least as great sacrifices for them as when families were large. It is, in fact, eagerness for the welfare of the children that often leads to the limitation of middle-class families. Moreover many thoughtful observers have of late years been led to regard the crowded state of Europe as the main underlying cause

of the Great War. They feel that a like catastrophe will recur unless an altruism which limits population-increase can be made to prevail. By medicine and hygiene Nature's destructive forces have been conquered. But the victory will be disastrous to human welfare unless a desire for many children, which is natural and until recently was laudable, is held in check. In action based upon such considerations there is an element of self-renunciation which is surely Christian. Those who suggest that it springs from a secret conviction that children are a burden rather than a joy seem to me to malign the more thoughtful of their fellow-men and women. I do not believe that we can get stability of social progress until we spread throughout all classes a spirit of grave and serious consideration of the ethics of child-bearing. There is a limit to the population which these islands can bear. We have probably reached that limit, and further increase must be used in emigration. But our emigrants must be worthy of the race, free from the taints which make for racial inferiority. If they are bred recklessly in squalor, and brought up amid physical and moral dirt, they will for the most part bear throughout life the handicap of their origin. Other lands will not desire them; and, in fact, through lack of energy and initiative, they will remain at home, a burden to be borne.

To-day I would urge that through education we might do much more than is being done at present to prevent reckless child-bearing. When a child is born it is the duty of the community to give it every possible opportunity for social health. This duty is widely recognised. Because we accept it we endure—I hope willingly—heavy taxation. We value the costly work

alike of teachers and of public health officials. Yet surely because the community does so much—at such cost—for all those born within it, it has the right to take measures to prevent the increase of tainted stocks, and it will be wise to teach its more improvident members that their large families are a hindrance to social progress. The churches might help in thus creating a healthier public opinion. There is dispute as to the means which should be used to secure a decrease of reckless fecundity. But surely all must agree that it is gravely wrong that children should swarm in overcrowded slums. I have in my work of late come across terrible cases of large families born of tuberculous parents in wretched houses in dismal courts. Such parents have done wrong in producing children under such conditions ; and, speaking in the name of Christ, the lover of children, we ought to condemn their action. Those who praise them in that they obey the law " increase and multiply and replenish the earth " merely evade serious thought by quoting a text which cannot be thus applied to modern conditions. The spirit of the Gospel must replace the ancient injunction. More than one law put forth by men of old was repudiated by Christ. He surely would have us to-day warn parents that they have a duty to their children, and that if they cannot perform that duty they should not bring children into the world. A note of sternness runs through the Gospel : " Offences will come. But woe unto him through whom they come. It were well for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea rather than that he should cause one of these little ones to stumble."

The children are the heirs of the race—the hope of

the race. You all know—as every teacher knows—that to build up a better social order we must work through the children. Only as we create, in all ranks of the community, a sense of grave responsibility on the part of parents towards their children—only as we press that responsibility even to the limit of renunciation of parenthood—can we get the possibility of stable social advance. At present your work—despite all your efforts—is perilously poised between loss and gain. None of you dare say that the future is secure. Our civilisation is dangerously weighted by a carelessness on the part of the less provident that may yet submerge us. If men begin to despair under the heavy burden of taxation a violent reaction may set in which will tacitly repudiate the Christian idealism animating recent social developments. In fact the old truth remains : all machinery fails unless behind it there is spiritual development. "Create in me a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within me."

We need to see this prayer fortify the spread of responsibility and knowledge through all classes of the community if our elaborately organised civilisation is not to break down. God uses our sins to scourge us and our necessities to teach us. Just in so far as we learn from the pressure of circumstance and use our knowledge aright, we accept Divine guidance. The Holy Spirit—need I emphasise the fact on Whitsunday ?—is still active among men. The power of God's Spirit guides all who seek His Kingdom ; and if we seek first that Kingdom and God's righteousness the other things that we need will be ours.

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XX

CATHOLICISM AND CHRISTIANITY.[1]

"Thou shalt have none other gods before Me."—EXODUS xx. 3.

THE present position of the Church of England is a cause of grave anxiety to all who wish it well. The Catholic movement within the Church, which arose during the nineteenth century, has within the last twenty-five years proceeded apace. The value of the Reformation, to which our Church owes its distinctive doctrinal position, is usually belittled and sometimes even derided, by those called Anglo-Catholics. Doctrines which are explicitly repudiated in our Articles, such as the Romish doctrine of Invocation of Saints, are openly taught. Sacramental practices, such as Reservation, which had not been heard of in our Church for three hundred years, have been introduced in flat defiance of the law. Naturally, these new developments arouse widespread irritation; they have alienated many from the Church of their fathers. But more serious is the decline in the number and quality of candidates for the ministry. The new Catholicism is essentially a turning back to the past; it is reactionary. Able young men see that the ideas on which it rests cannot be reconciled with any view, which to them seems reasonable, of the character of God's government of the world. Evangelicals regard its

[1] A Sermon preached in Westminster Abbey on Sunday, June 14th, 1925.

distinctive teaching as a degradation of the Gospel of Christ; and young men with such an outlook naturally hesitate to take Holy Orders. With the grave shortage of clergy the parochial system of the Church of England is breaking down. Differences within the Church are so acute that in the large cities the parish churches are becoming congregational and not parochial. As the quality of the clergy declines their outlook is becoming increasingly narrow. The best modern theological scholarship is ignored. Contributions to, and leading articles in, certain popular Church papers are amazingly ill-informed and partisan. And at this epoch the Prayer Book falls to be revised. An official committee wisely put forward proposals which in the main were non-controversial, but as soon as these proposals reached the representative clergy of the Church the desire to give a Catholic colour to the Prayer Book showed itself. We stand at the cross roads. I cannot foresee the future, but during the last eight months since I left Westminster for Birmingham I have seen enough of the situation within our Church to make me gravely apprehensive.

Now it is a curious fact that while this retrograde Catholic movement has been making headway within our Church, archæological scholarship has been pouring a flood of light on the origins of Catholicism. It used to be assumed that Christianity conquered the Roman Empire in a fierce battle with official Roman State religion, which was a decorous and somewhat dull worship of the Latin deities who were supposed to preside over the destinies of Rome. Little by little the fact has emerged that this type of religion had become obsolete before Christianity began to spread over the Roman Empire. The prevailing religions of

the Mediterranean in the first centuries of the Christian era were mainly mystery-cults associated with deities like the Great Mother and Isis and Mithra. When these cults first came to Rome attempts were made to suppress them, but they appealed to the spirit of the age, and especially to a kind of luxuriant devotion which went with a desire for immortality. Often of savage and gross origin, the mystery-faiths were gradually purified by a remarkable spiritual movement in the second century of the Christian era. Now especially characteristic of these cults were sacerdotalism and sacramentalism. On the one hand it was believed that the priests of the mysteries had secret knowledge and special spiritual powers. They held the keys of eternal life. To gain immortality it was necessary to be initiated by them; initiation gave entrance to the mysteries which were deemed channels of divine grace. On their sacramental side some, if not all, of these cults had their sacred meals; but, whatever the sacraments were—some were disgusting, while others had a singular likeness to our Communion service—it was held that through participation in them the believer would after death enjoy eternal life with the gods.

The fundamental ideas of the different mystery-faiths were so similar that a tendency towards the worship of one God arose. The more philosophic apologists for the mysteries came to think of the patron deities of the various cults as manifestations of one Divine Spirit. Some of these cults demanded moral conduct and not merely religious enthusiasm from the worshipper; but the essence of them all was magical sacramentalism: salvation could be gained by the right kind of initiation and communion.

Naturally, great importance was attached to correct ritual, which usually was highly elaborate. The priest must do the correct thing in the correct way, or the magic would not work. In some cults the priests were pledged to celibacy. The priests of Isis had the tonsure and wore linen vestments. The more philosophic adherents of the mysteries of course denied that their salvation systems were at the bottom irrational magic. They claimed the possession of a sacred tradition of great antiquity, knowledge of the way of salvation through sacrament by which the believer could be re-born for eternity—*renatus in æternum.*

Now into a world in which this welter of sacramental faiths was dominant, Christianity came. Unlike the mystery religions it was exclusive, like Judaism from which it sprang; and some measure of exclusiveness it happily retained. But it did not entirely resist the contagion of alien ideas. At first it was free from sacerdotalism. In the New Testament, said the great Bishop Lightfoot,[1] all Christians are priests alike. The priestly functions and privileges of the Christian people are never regarded as transferred or even delegated to the ministers of the Church. And, moreover, no very distinct traces of sacerdotalism are visible in the age immediately after the apostles. Yet having once taken root in the Church, it sprang up rapidly. Shortly after the middle of the third century—I quote Lightfoot again—the plant had attained to all but full growth.

The essence of sacerdotalism is the belief that the priest has spiritual powers which other believers do

[1] Lightfoot, Dissertation on *The Christian Ministry* in *St. Paul's Epistle to the Philippians* (Macmillan, 1881), p. 184. In view of recent controversies, it may be observed that no objection to Lightfoot's conclusions has ever been successfully maintained.

not possess; he is, that is to say, vicar of God, and not merely representative of the congregation. That he is vicar of God is the Catholic belief; but the true Christian idea is that for due order certain men shall be set apart as ministers to perform the highest acts of congregational worship. Such action is seemly; it makes for due order; and yet if a layman, commissioned by the congregation, should perform such acts, as in the Free Churches to-day, we can by the New Testament only deem his conduct irregular, and certainly not spiritually void. It is impossible, in the light of the New Testament, to unchurch the great Nonconformist communions of to-day.

Sacerdotalism, then, entered the Christian Church as it breathed the atmosphere of the mysteries, in accordance with the invariable law that no form of faith can entirely resist the ideas of the people whom it tries successfully to convert. But as Christianity became Catholicised it also took over from the mystery-faiths much of their magical sacramentalism. There is little sacramental teaching in the New Testament. What there is in the gospels has the purest spiritual character. Throughout the New Testament there is no suggestion that in the Holy Communion any magical change occurs in the bread and wine. Christ is present at His holy table—yes, present wherever two or three are gathered together in His name. He is present in the whole service of Holy Communion as worshippers in faith and hope and love repeat His last supper. But His presence is spiritual, the Divine Spirit coming to the spirit of man directly as the worshipper lifts up his soul to the Lord. His presence is spiritual but not mechanical. He comes only to the true worshipper: the wicked do not

receive Him, though they may eat the consecrated bread.

How different is this from the ideas which entered Catholicism from the mystery-faiths and made the Catholic sacramental doctrine which our Church repudiated at the Reformation. Such entry into the Church was rapid. Ignatius, at the beginning of the second century, could speak of the Eucharist as "the medicine of immortality, an antidote against death." In the fourth century Cyril of Jerusalem could say that when we eat the consecrated elements "we become carriers of Christ, His body and blood entering into our members"! Along with such beliefs we can put that of the Christian who wrote the *Clementine Homilies*; he asserted that "evil spirits enter the body if we eat food consecrated to them, and there they hide for a time and unite with the soul." These passages show that the Christian Church soon entered an atmosphere vastly different from that of the New Testament; and the ideas of this atmosphere still persist in Catholic sacramentalism. The Catholic authorities whom I have quoted reveal the change from the New Testament to the mystery-faiths. Religion has been contaminated by magic; the spiritual has been degraded to the mechanical. In fact, as practically all independent scholars are now agreed, the Catholicising of Christianity was the paganising of it. The rapidity of this process is largely to be explained by the circumstance that the centuries during which it took place, the first four centuries of the Christian era, were an epoch of rapid intellectual decline. The deterioration of scientific thought in the ancient world before the Roman Empire was over-run was amazing. In medicine, for

instance, superstitious credulity destroyed a system of accurate clinical observation whose level was only again reached during last century. When European thought recovered intellectual freedom at the Renaissance, through the inspiration of Greek culture, it is significant that the repudiation of sacerdotalism and of mechanical sacramentalism were marked features of the religious revival which we call the Reformation. Since then the scientific spirit, which is the natural foe of magic, has dominated educated thought. Unless that spirit decays and a new era of intellectual barbarism overtakes us, Christianity as corrupted by the pagan mystery superstitions has no future; and if, through some adverse combination of circumstances, the Church of England should now be Catholicised, the decay which we already witness and deplore will be rendered more disastrously complete.

Fundamentally, the difference between the Christian and the Catholic systems is a different belief as to the nature of God. Christ taught that God is the source of righteousness and love. His actions are reasonable to us, reasonable like those of a good man. He is, in fact, rightly to be thought of as our Father, and the union of the spirit of man with the Divine Spirit needs neither priestly mediation nor correct ritual. "Where two or three are gathered together in My name there am I," is the charter of Christian liberty. But the conception of God, as Catholicised through the influence of pagan magical beliefs, is alien from Christ's teaching. In it the priest is supposed by virtue of a mechanical succession to be endowed, not merely with authority to act in the name of the congregation, but with spiritual powers. He can then, by correctness of ritual-action and words, endue inanimate matter with

a spiritual character ; and this spiritual character, according to the theory, can be transferred to the worshipper, prepared by priestly absolution, who thus and only thus finds salvation. The sacraments, in fact, work by magic, or, in more polite phrase, *ex opere operato*. The system of thought is complete with the completeness of the pagan mysteries, but it is irrational, unreasonable. There is no reason to think that God works in such a way. The belief that He does so has no warrant in the teaching of Christ. [1]

[1] Naturally Catholic apologists seek to minimise the extent to which the mystery-faiths contributed to the construction of sacramental beliefs analogous to Transubstantiation. The student will do well to avoid, if he can, partisan writings and to read the investigations of scholars who have no ecclesiastical axe to grind. As regards all kinds of primitive religious conceptions he will find the notes of Dr. S. A. Cook's edition of W. Robertson Smith's *Religion of the Semites* (Black, 1927) most valuable. An article on *Mystery Religions and Pre-Socratic Philosophy*, in *The Cambridge Ancient History*, Vol. 4, 1926, by Mr. F. M. Cornford, can be commended as free from bias. Speaking of Orphism (considerably before the rise of Christianity) Mr. Cornford says : " The supreme means of grace is the sacramental feast in which the soul feeds on the substance of the god who suffered, died, and rose again, and thereby is assured of ultimate deliverance from the cycle of rebirth. This central rite is the most awful of mysteries. It is a re-enactment of the primal sin committed by the powers of evil, and at the same time the sacrament of redemption and atonement."

XXI

THE EUCHARIST [1]

MODERN Churchmen can be grouped together, not because they have reached agreement as to an extensive system of dogma, but because they share a common outlook. They claim to be members of the Church Universal, which includes all whose faith is drawn from Jesus the Christ. They would justify this claim by their endeavour to be worthy, in act and thought, of the Master whose revelation they accept and whose Person they adore. Further, the Modern Churchmen, with whom I associate myself, belong to the Church of England because they believe that our national Church at the Reformation preserved what was best worth keeping of the historic development of Christianity, while it then rejected religious conceptions, alien from the thought of Christ, which were producing grave moral evils. But they describe themselves as *Modern* Churchmen because they believe that, through the Holy Spirit, the revelation of Christ is a continuing process. They therefore accept all the assured conclusions of modern scholarship and modern science and are ready, so far as is necessary, to apply them to modify traditional doctrines of the Christian Church. It is not to be expected that, with such a basis of unity, there can be complete unanimity. But God has given us

[1] An Address to the Modern Churchmen's Conference at Oxford, in August, 1925.

alike our spiritual aspirations and our capacity to reason about them. We are built to a common pattern. Our reason is akin to the Universal Reason, the Logos of creation. As we apply it to the problems of faith and purge our conclusions of error by the interplay of mind upon mind, we not only separate essentials from non-essentials, but we also find with regard to essentials an increasing measure of agreement. The growth of knowledge during the last century has done more to alter our ideas, alike with regard to the physical Universe and with regard to Christian origins, than all previous changes in thought since the Christian era began. It has been amazingly rapid. None the less, the consequent attempts to reformulate the Christian faith have not led to chaos. The faith of a Modern Churchman is already alike coherent and substantial. In this scheme of faith, as I propose to shew, the Eucharist has a definite and important place.

Naturally I begin by indicating the way in which traditional ideas with regard to the origin and development of the Eucharist have been altered by the growth of knowledge through literary criticism and historical research.

The origin of the Eucharist is, of course, to be found in the meal which Jesus took with His disciples on the night before His death on the Cross. Of that meal we have four accounts which, though not all independent, differ considerably from one another. They are due to St. Paul, St. Mark, St. Luke, and the unknown author of St. Matthew's Gospel. With our modern views of the Bible we no longer attempt to smooth out differences so as to reach a vague harmony. We carefully investigate discrepancies in our sacred

records to discover how far they may be due either to defects of oral tradition or to modifications of that tradition which made it accord with practices existing when the records were compiled. Men both repeat inaccurately what they have heard and also read back the present into the past.

The earliest account of the origin of the Eucharist which has come down to us is that given by St. Paul in his First Letter to the Corinthians. He says, somewhat enigmatically, that the account which he gives he had "received from the Lord." Undoubtedly when he wrote, some twenty-five years after the Crucifixion, the Eucharist was a fixed rite of the Christian community, and St. Paul believed that Jesus had said at the Last Supper, "This do in remembrance of Me." St. Mark, writing ten or fifteen years later, omits these words. The omission is surprising in view of the close personal association between St. Mark and St. Paul, and it suggests that he had received, and preferred, another tradition. His preference seemed to have little significance so long as St. Luke was believed to have accepted St. Paul's statement. But modern textual criticism, based purely on a study of existing manuscripts and their relative values, has reached the conclusion that in St. Luke's account of the Last Supper there has been an interpolation. According to this view, the Evangelist did not originally state that Jesus said "Do this in remembrance of Me." Some early scribe noticed the discrepancy between St. Luke's narrative and that of St. Paul. He thereupon inserted the two sentences (Luke xxii. 19 *b*, 20), "This do in remembrance of Me. And the cup in like manner after supper, saying, This cup is the new covenant in my blood, even that which is poured out for you."

The conclusion that none of these words were in the original statement was reached by such sober scholars as Westcott and Hort in their famous edition of the Greek New Testament.[1] It is now accepted by the majority of competent scholars. When we accept it we cease to be perplexed by St. Luke's double mention of the Cup, which had always puzzled thoughtful readers of his narrative and for which ingenious but fantastic explanations have often been given.

"St. Matthew's" narrative of the Last Supper is obviously dependent on that of St. Mark, though the later evangelist does not slavishly follow the earlier. Both, however, omit the words "This do in remembrance of Me"; and the first evangelist adds "for the remission of sins" in describing "the new covenant."

As is well known, the Fourth Gospel records, not the Last Supper, but the washing by our Lord of His disciples' feet. If, then, we take modern scholarship as our guide, we reach the conclusion that no evangelist thought it necessary to state that Jesus said "Do this in remembrance of Me." By their silence the first three evangelists seem to suggest that these words were not spoken by our Lord. The argument from silence is not wholly satisfactory.[2] Dr. Rashdall,[3] however, in his epoch-making Bampton lectures on the Atonement ten years ago, concluded against the genuineness of the words and clearly pointed out the significance of the conclusion, as follows:

"If we set these words aside, there is nothing to suggest

[1] Dr. Sanday in his *Outlines of the Life of Christ* gives a detailed account of the process of interpolation.

[2] But it is less dangerous and more scientific than is the attribution to one document—in this case to three documents—of ideas found only in another.

[3] *The Idea of Atonement in Christian Theology* (1919), p. 59.

that our Lord had the intention of founding an institution or permanent rite of any kind. Whatever exactly happened at the Last Supper, the idea of perpetually commemorating that supper or of investing with a new significance the Jewish offering of cup and bread at the table was the work of the Church, not of its Founder."

One or two subsidiary questions may be asked and answered.

Was the Last Supper the Passover meal? Most modern scholars agree with St. John, as against the other evangelists, that it was not. Probably it was the religious meal, kept after sunset by strict Jewish families on the eve of a great festival, in which the father of the family solemnly blessed the cup and the bread. Professor Bacon[1] says:

"At the evening meal—not the passover supper which would have presented the closer symbol of the slain lamb—Jesus assumed His usual part as dispenser of the food. But on this occasion He made the loaf a symbol of His body. Its destruction should not be dissolution, but a stronger union of the brotherhood by as much as the sacrifice made for its sake was now greater."

What did Jesus actually say and do at the Last Supper? Opinions will always differ. But those who regard the primitive text of St. Luke as the best-attested narrative would give the answer somewhat as follows:

"Jesus said: With desire I have desired to eat the passover with you before I suffer, but I say unto you, I will not eat it until it be fulfilled in the Kingdom of God. And He received a cup, and when He had given thanks he said: 'Take this and divide it amongst yourselves: for I say unto you, I will not drink from henceforth of the fruit of the vine until the Kingdom of God shall come.

[1] *The Beginnings of the Gospel Story*, p. 204.

And He took bread and, when He had given thanks, He brake it and gave to them, saying: This is My body. But, behold, the hand of him that betrayeth Me is with Me on the table."

If the critical inquiries to which I have directed your attention are sound, you will justly conclude that in our Lord's words and actions at His Last Supper there is but a frail foundation for the elaborate sacramental practices and teaching of developed Catholicism. How are we to account for the rapid growth of sacramental worship, and of magical ideas associated with the consecrated elements, in the Church during the first three centuries? The answer is given by modern investigation of the religious environment in which early Christianity was shaped. Until comparatively recently accurate knowledge of contemporary paganism was scanty. It was generally assumed that official polytheism satisfied the masses, while the more cultured classes, in so far as they were not mere hedonists, had agnostic Stoicism as their creed. But modern research has made it clear that, when Christianity began to spread, religious enthusiasm and devotion in the Græco-Roman world were mainly associated with the mystery-religions.[1] These were a group of cults of Eastern or Egyptian origin which in the course of time developed a strong family likeness to one another. The most important had become markedly sacramental, with rites of initiation and purification

[1] The best accounts of the mystery-religions available for the English reader will be found in Dill: *Roman Society from Nero to Marcus Aurelius*: Kennedy, *St. Paul and the Mystery Religions*: Angus, *The Mystery Religions and Christianity*. The best account of Mithraism, the mystery-cult which in the end was the chief rival of Christianity, is to be found in the monumental researches of Cumont. Cumont's small book, *The Religion of Mithra*, has been translated into English; so, too, has his valuable *Oriental Religions in Roman Paganism*.

supposed to have been in each case derived from, or peculiarly acceptable to, the patron-divinity of the cult. Through such rites it was believed that the favour of the protecting divinity might be gained. The mystery-religions stimulated a religious devotion which was genuine if at times, to our notions, repulsive. Most, and ultimately probably all, the great mystery-cults promised to the initiate a new birth to a blessed immortality. The defect of all these cults was that their sacramentalism was essentially unethical. Sacramental grace depended on correct ritual performed by priests on whom sacerdotal powers had been duly conferred: it was not the Divine reward of righteousness. The sacraments, in fact, worked mechanically *ex opere operato*: in other words, they were magical. It must not, however, be supposed that the mysteries did nothing to foster obedience to the moral law. Some of them, especially after the general religious revival in the ancient world which took place during the second century, had a wholesome moral influence. But the fact remains that human nature is such that magic and morality consort ill together. The verdict which Dr. Angus[1] passes on the mysteries is both weighty and guarded:

"They lent themselves too easily to externalism by an exaggerated importance of ritual; they awakened a religious exaltation such as has rarely appeared in religious history, but with which ethical considerations were not of primary interest; they confused the physical symbol and the religious experience."

Now a new religion spreads, not primarily by winning the irreligious, but by gaining religious men and women from other faiths. At first Christianity

[1] *The Mystery Religions and Christianity* (1925), p. 245.

gained most of its Gentile converts from the God-fearers of Judaism, the proselytes of the synagogues of the Dispersion. Speedily, however, as the cleavage with Judaism became sharper, its converts came in increasing numbers from adherents of the mysteries. But when men change their faith they do not abandon all their old ideas. Many of these ideas they retain in the new setting, and this is especially true of ideas that have strong emotional associations. It is not therefore surprising that by the beginning of the second century we find definite indications of the influence of the mystery-religions in Christian writings. By the middle of the third century magical conceptions of Baptism and the Eucharist had gained a firm place within the Christian system, and, as a necessary corollary, a rigid sacerdotalism had replaced the New Testament conception of the priesthood of all Christian believers. In the third century, says Dr. Angus[1]:

"The typical ecclesiastic, Cyprian, stands not far apart from any Mystery-priest when he seriously chronicles stories of the deadly efficacy of the elements of the Supper both upon a little girl who had not reached years of moral discrimination and upon adults. One woman who surreptitiously took the elements 'received not food, but a sword,' causing internal convulsions. A guilty man found that the elements received from the priest turned into cinders in his hand."

The extravagant sacramentalism of the Middle Ages is known to all: the abuses to which it necessarily led are equally familiar. The Reformation was an ethical recoil which *inter alia* repudiated the ideas of the mystery-cults as it turned to the purer religious faith of the New Testament. It was no accident that

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 256.

the Reformation won the Nordic races of Europe while it failed with those where the Iberian strain is still dominant. Among the latter magical sacramentalism is far older than Christianity—how much older our present knowledge does not allow us to say. Belief in such sacramentalism decayed among educated men and women of the northern races when it was exposed to the atmosphere of free inquiry which the Renaissance brought into Western Europe. Unless some era of intellectual decay overtakes our civilisation, causing us to repudiate our Renaissance heritage, it is safe to say that typical Latin sacramentalism will not dominate English religion. Should it dominate the Church of England, that Church will cease to be the Church of the English people.

There are, of course, some who contend that St. Paul's teaching in the New Testament was shaped by pagan sacramentalism. He was certainly familiar with the language of the mysteries which he uses with freedom. The influence upon his thought of these forms of faith was definitely greater than we should expect from what we know of his life-history. But I believe that a careful exegesis of the relevant passages, such as Professor H. A. A. Kennedy[1] has made, shews that St. Paul's sacramental teaching is ethical at the core. He did not teach that in the Eucharist there is a magical communication of the glorified body of Christ to the worshippers through the medium of bread and wine. Could he have anticipated the later history of the Christian Church and the place which his letters were to have among its authoritative documents, he would doubtless have taken measures to guard his teaching from misunderstanding and the

[1] In his book *St. Paul and the Mystery Religions.*

Christian faith from corruption. The most unfavourable verdict that can fairly be reached has been given by Dr. Inge[1]: though St. Paul "was ready to fight to the death against the Judaizing of Christianity [he] was willing to take the first step, and a long one, towards the Paganizing of it." With this verdict we may associate the judgment on the whole matter by Dr. Glover[2]:

"There is a growing concensus of opinion among independent scholars that Jesus instituted no sacraments, yet Paul found the rudiments of them among the Christians and believed that he had the warrant of Jesus for the heightening which he gave to them. Ignatius speaks of the Ephesians 'breaking one bread which is the medicine of immortality and the antidote that we should not die' —the former phrase reappearing in Clement of Alexandria. That such ideas should emerge in the Christian community is natural enough, when we consider its environment—a world without natural science, steeped in belief in every kind of magic and enchantment, and full of public and private religious societies, every one of which had its mysteries and miracles and its blood-bond with its peculiar deity. It was from such a world and such societies that most of the converts came and brought with them the thoughts and instincts of countless generations which had never conceived of a religion without rites and mysteries. . . . The Christians readily recognised the parallel between their rites and those of the heathen, but no one seems to have perceived the real connection between them. Quite naïvely they suggest the exact opposite—it was the dæmons who foresaw what the Christian rites would be, and forestalled them with all sorts of pagan parodies."

I have now prepared the way for the valuation of the Eucharist which a Churchman must make in the light of modern knowledge. In other words, we are

[1] *Outspoken Essays*, First Series, p. 228.
[2] *Conflict of Religions* (5th edition), pp. 158f.

in a position to state why Modern Churchmen value the service. May I say at the outset that, in my opinion, acceptance of the conclusions which I have put before you, while it affects the significance, does not lessen the value of the rite. The traditional importance of the Holy Communion in our liturgy remains undiminished; and Modern Churchmen do, in fact, value the Sacrament more highly than the older Evangelicals. But our modern knowledge makes crude rationalisations of Eucharistic doctrine, such as transubstantiation and analogous theories, more obviously impossible.

Let us consider in order that we may dismiss a typically crude argument advanced by exponents of naïve theology who deny that Modern Churchmen can sincerely value the Eucharist. It is sometimes argued that, if Jesus did not say the words "Do this in remembrance of me," we have no reason to believe that the use of the words "This is my body" will have the result of converting the bread of the Sacrament into the body of Christ. The answer to this objection is that we have no reason to believe that such conversion ever takes place. Let us assume that St. Paul's account of the Last Supper is correct. Would any of those seated at the table with our Lord have believed that the bread became His body, when He in the body was present before them? Surely not. Christ's giving of Himself was spiritual. The breaking of the bread was the symbol of the breaking of His body on the Cross, the symbol of Christ's gift of His own life that His Spirit, through the agency of those whom he inspired, might redeem the world. Moreover, if Jesus said the words "This do in remembrance of me," he certainly did not say that, if the Last

Supper was repeated by His disciples, the bread which was used should become His body. No such conditional promise is either expressed or implied in either of the four accounts of the Last Supper which have come down to us.

A second objection is more plausible. We are sometimes told that if it be true that the Eucharist was established by the Church and not by its Founder, if its significance was heightened by St. Paul in an age when non-ethical sacramentalism pervaded religion, and if moreover crude magical ideas were speedily associated with the material elements used in the rite, then it were better to eliminate the rite from Christian worship. But is such an argument really satisfactory? *Abusus non tollit usum:* the abuse of a good thing is no reason why we should abandon it. The breaking of bread, varied though the significance attached to it has been,[1] preceded the organisation of the Christian Church. From the very earliest times Christians have shared a common meal in which they have sought to reproduce the circumstances of our Lord's Last Supper with His disciples. Why should we break with our past, especially when all must admit that the Holy Communion has quickened true devotion to Christ in countless numbers of His followers? It is true that unethical sacramentalism is demoralising, but we have no cause to abandon religion because magic is its bastard sister. If, as we all believe, there is a God, Creator, and Ruler of the world, to Whom the spirit of man can have access, it is certain that He manifests Himself in space and time and that material

[1] See, for example, that earliest surviving Christian manual of worship and Church order, *The Didache*, in which there is no hint of magical sacramentalism.

things can be channels or instruments of His revelation of Himself. The widespread conviction of humanity that God can thus be approached sacramentally, though it has often been combined with fantastic rites and puerile theories, witnesses to an instinct in men which needs to be purified but not destroyed. Surely St. Paul was right in perceiving that there was a type of sacramental worship which is in no sense magical because it is ethical, based upon the belief that God in Christ gives Himself sacramentally to those who seek to do His will. Surely, moreover, in such an idea there is nothing foreign to the teaching of Jesus. As Professor Kennedy has well said,[1] true sacramentalism "is no excrescence of primitive superstition, but corresponds to a permanent demand of the human consciousness, the demand that the visible and tangible should be a seal of faith to that which is unseen and eternal."

We turn now to the Eucharist. We value it. So also we value solitary prayer; or words from a good man who, as we say, pours out his soul; or quiet meditation when the sunshine gives glory to the beauty of nature. Why? For an answer we say haltingly in every case, "We feel better for it. We get peace and joy. We are nearer God." The basis of our valuation is undifferentiated religious experience. Those who have not had the experience, who have never felt the thrill of pure religious emotion, will wonder at our enthusiasm. Yet we have seen, felt, known the presence of God. Because there are circumstances, places, writings, men who give us what our souls need, who lift us though it be but for a moment above ourselves, we value them. They are

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 263.

channels or instruments of the grace of God. There are some who would have us rest content with what I have called undifferentiated religious experience and not try to analyse it. But man is so made that he must try to understand his experience. He always seeks to give reasons for his likes and dislikes, and above all to explain the nature of his richest emotions. If good reasons are not forthcoming, bad ones will have an undisputed reign. Now it is a fact of Christian experience that the Eucharist is a type of worship in which men and women throughout the Christian centuries have felt that they were led to Christ and inspired by Him. They have expressed it by saying that His real Presence was with them in the rite. We have then to explain a psychical fact. The problem before us is psychological.

The solution offered us by transubstantiation was obtained by jumbling together physics and metaphysics. The distinction between the substance and accidents of a piece of matter is for us meaningless. For the belief that inanimate matter can be endowed with spiritual qualities there is no scientific evidence. The contention can be tested by the usual scientific procedure of experiment and observation. A Catholic praying before a wafer which he wrongly believed to have been consecrated would gain precisely the same spiritual satisfaction as if his belief were true. One sometimes finds the suggestion in Anglo-Catholic apologetics that some good people have a spiritual *flair* which at once enables them to perceive on entering a church whether the consecrated elements are there "reserved." We must be tender when superstition is mingled with devotion; but we may confidently affirm that this fancied *flair* would not survive such an experi-

mental test as could easily be devised. I repeat—the problem before us is psychological.

This was perceived by our Reformers as soon as the scientific spirit, reborn at the Renaissance, began to influence religious doctrine. The Reformers had no psychological terminology, but none the less they expressed themselves with admirable clearness and good sense. From the authoritative documents of our Church we can quote: "A sacrament is an outward sign of invisible grace." "To such as rightly, worthily and with faith receive the same, the bread which we break is *a partaking of* the Body of Christ." "Transubstantiation overthroweth the nature of a sacrament and hath given occasion to many superstitions." Hooker[1] developed the Anglican point of view with his accustomed lucidity. He inquired whether, when the Eucharist is administered, "Christ be whole *within man only*, or else His body and blood be externally seated in the very consecrated elements themselves." And he answered that "the bread and the cup are His body and blood because they are causes instrumental upon the receipt whereof the *participation of* His body and blood ensueth." Therefore, he said, "the real presence of Christ's most blessed body and blood is not to be sought in the Sacrament, but in the worthy receiver of the Sacrament." Furthermore, the Sacraments "are not really, nor do they really contain in themselves, that grace which with them or by them it pleaseth God to bestow." And, two final quotations, "*the soul of man* is the receptacle of Christ's presence." "What should induce men to think that the grace of the Eucharist must needs be in the Eucharist before it can be in us that receive it?"

[1] *Ecclesiastical Polity*, Bk. V, Ch. lxvii (2).

channels or instruments of the grace of God. There are some who would have us rest content with what I have called undifferentiated religious experience and not try to analyse it. But man is so made that he must try to understand his experience. He always seeks to give reasons for his likes and dislikes, and above all to explain the nature of his richest emotions. If good reasons are not forthcoming, bad ones will have an undisputed reign. Now it is a fact of Christian experience that the Eucharist is a type of worship in which men and women throughout the Christian centuries have felt that they were led to Christ and inspired by Him. They have expressed it by saying that His real Presence was with them in the rite. We have then to explain a psychical fact. The problem before us is psychological.

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[1] *Ecclesiastical Polity*, Bk. V, Ch. lxvii (2).

natural and supernatural. The so-called laws of nature are God's laws, expressions of the uniformity of His action; and psychological "laws" express the way in which men receive from one another, and from the Holy Spirit, their thoughts and emotions.

If we abandon, as I contend we must abandon, all magical views of the Eucharist, we must explain it by such scientific knowledge of human mental processes as we possess. As we do this we shall not depreciate the value of the Sacrament—that were impossible—but we shall the more persuasively commend it to thoughtful men and women. We shall also avoid erroneous doctrines and practices which are dangerous to true religion. In particular we shall give no countenance to the view that Christ comes only, or especially, at the moment of the consecration of the elements. As Dr. Carnegie Simpson[1] has truly said:

"It is a greater thought that He is present in the entire Sacrament than that He is located in the elements which are but part of it; that He is in it from the beginning than that He comes at the moment of consecration; and what is more important than either of these points—that He is here not as the offered oblation but as the Celebrant. This is the greater doctrine of the Real Presence."

If we keep a true understanding of the Eucharist, we shall re-affirm the objection of our Church to reservation of the consecrated elements. This objection finds expression in our Articles of Religion; the practice is precluded by one of our rubrics[2]; after the Reformation it was unknown in our Church until recent years. The commonly-used phrase "Reservation of the

[1] *Church Principles* (1923), p. 107.

[2] The Archbishops of Canterbury and York on May 1st, 1900, formally stated that "the effect and one of the objects of this rubric were prohibitive of reservation."

Sacrament" is a misnomer. As Dr. Simpson says, "the part is not the whole." I would add that you can no more reserve a psychological process than you can reserve an exploding shell.

Dr. Carnegie Simpson is a High Church Presbyterian, but his namesake Canon Simpson[1] of St. Paul's puts the same point of view with admirable cogency:

"The spirit of the Anglican Articles and Prayer Book is only satisfied by a rejection of all theories employed to justify the use of the consecrated elements for purposes other than reception. Such uses imply a practical identification of the elements with the Person of Christ, who must necessarily be wherever His natural Flesh, or His natural Blood, is—and this is essentially Transubstantiation."

I would add the words of Hort,[2] the greatest English theologian of the nineteenth century, whom some of us claim as the founder of English Modernism:

"The fictitious and constructive offering up of a phantom body and phantom blood is a degradation of the Holy Communion to the unreal mimicry of a sacrifice which, if real, would now be heathenish. It is the nemesis of destroying the relation between earthly elements and the heavenly life."

How frequent should be the service which Hort has called "our highest act of Communion"? Naturally if we take a magical *ex opere operato* view of the sacrament and assume that it works notwithstanding the spiritual lethargy of the recipient, we shall claim that participation in it cannot be too frequent. But, if we take a view which is doctrinally sound because it is psychologically reasonable, we shall be more cautious.

[1] *Prayer Book Dictionary*, p. 793.
[2] *The Way, The Truth, The Life* (1897), p. 214.

We cannot always live on the heights. The latent danger in all worship is that it may be dulled by repetition, made stale by custom. A service which requires solemn preparation cannot for the majority of people be a daily—or, I would add, even a weekly—habit; and there are other modes of worship, typified by our morning and evening prayer, in which men at a lower spiritual level can join and from which they can get a spiritual quickening to which we can assign no limits. Our Church was wise to set before her adult members the duty of partaking of the Eucharist at least three times a year, and to leave each individual free to determine how much more often he ought to approach the table of the Lord.

No one regrets more than I do that recent developments of Anglo-Catholicism within the English Church have involved us once again in sacramental controversies. The Eucharist is so beautiful, so satisfying to the deepest spiritual needs of the Christian, that controversy with regard to it is peculiarly distasteful. None the less, as the great German mystic Eckhart[1] wrote:

"A man never gets to the underlying truth if he stops at the enjoyment of its symbol."

And with this I would combine Hort's great saying:

"Progress in theology does not consist in mutilation but in purification."

Modern Churchmen, by their insistence on a true doctrine of the Eucharist, can powerfully aid that religious revival in England for which all should work and pray. We need to purify and, in purifying, to

[1] *Meister Eckhart*, F. Pfeiffer, trs. C. de B. Evans (1924), p. 186.

develop and enrich the doctrine of the Eucharist. Let us remember, in the first place, that human life at its best finds expression in fellowship ; an isolated life is a sterile life ; and the Eucharist is the sacrament of fellowship in Christ. Secondly, let us bear in mind that we shall never rightly understand our place in the scheme of things save through some view of the Universe which makes it a unity. The Eucharist is the effectual symbol of a unity of humanity based on God as revealed in Christ. But it is representative of a still wider unity : a witness to the truth that all Christian life is sacramental, that the power of God is expressed and that His grace can be received through countless earthly vehicles. We are children of earth, the fruit of her womb, and also children of God ; yet between the two facts there is no opposition. The earth which bore us reveals the God who made us that our souls might rest in Him. Signs and vehicles of the Divine presence are all around us. To isolate our highest act of Communion is to neglect the truth that " the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof." Let us cling to St. Paul's extended sacramental faith : " All things work together for good to them that love God."

XXII

MEDICINE, RELIGION AND SUPERSTITION[1]

"Wisdom is justified of all her children."—St. Luke vii. 35.

I CANNOT to-day address members of the British Medical Association, now assembled for their ninety-third Annual Meeting, without expressing pleasure at the opportunity afforded me. I naturally share the regard in which the medical profession is held by all sensible men. My own studies and interests and needs have from time to time brought me into close contact with leaders of medical science in this country. I have had opportunities of measuring the value of their work and of realising the generosity of temper and fineness of character which it can develop. I know of no profession which more naturally leads to breadth of humane sympathy. Your work will not allow you to form any false estimate of human nature, or to ignore the fundamental instincts and appetites of man. But intimate knowledge makes a good physician not cynical but compassionate. Many of you have thus been led to revere the human body, and the spirit of which it is the shrine, as the noblest work of God on earth. The physician, who through the practice of his art acquires this religious reverence, learns to worship God through service to his fellow-men.

You are, to no small extent, guardians of public

[1] A Sermon preached in the Abbey Church, Bath, on Tuesday July 21st, 1925, before the British Medical Association.

morality. Your professional work constantly reminds you of the close connection between clean living and good health. You probably receive more confessions of grave importance than the clergy of the various branches of the Christian Church in this country. You are bound by principles of professional honour not to disclose what is thus revealed to you ; and although such an obligation may not be legally recognised, you know that, in fact, no High Court judge would allow you to be forced to violate the confidences which you receive. Because you are thus consulted and trusted you have immense opportunities of influencing the personal lives of your patients. A wise and sympathetic physician of high ideals can hardly fail to be a moral inspiration to the section of the community which he serves. His influence will make for social righteousness. He will feel impelled to seek to preserve the purity of family life. If his work lie among the poor he will naturally be sensitive to their especial hardships, and in particular to the evils of overcrowding. Wherever his work may lie, he will be able to advise those connected with social welfare, because he will have a knowledge more direct and more extensive than others can gain.

There are some among us who assume that medical science should, by religious teachers, be mainly considered in relation to public morality. But I would to-day emphasise the religious importance of the regard which physicians and surgeons must necessarily pay to accurate knowledge. Superstition is the bane of medicine no less than of religion. Every thoughtful physician, like every thoughtful clergyman, recognises the power of irrational beliefs. Neither is ignorant of the uses, and especially the base uses, which may be

made of such a power. Neither, if he is wise, will allow the immediate utility of irrational emotion to blind him to its dangers. We are living in a strange world where lax morality is matched by lax thought. If some present tendencies are permanent, Western civilisation will not escape the intellectual degeneration which finally ruined Græco-Roman civilisation some fifteen centuries ago. Until quite modern times the highest level reached by medical science was attained by the Hippocratic school in the great age of Greece. During the nineteenth century accurate clinical observation and patient research caused medical science first to reach and then far to surpass the level attained two thousand four hundred years ago. The progress which has been made in medical knowledge and surgical skill since, say, the time of Charles II is amazing. Yet are you sure that you can preserve what has been won? Is its value safely rooted in popular esteem? The great triumphs of Greek medicine were gradually, but none the less definitely, ignored. Medicine ceased to be scientific as it became slowly barbarised by folk-beliefs which, especially after the Christian era began, acquired new vitality. From science the populace of the ancient worlds turned to quackery. Old wives' lore, magical charms, visits to healing shrines, all the paraphernalia of primitive health-cults, renewed their ascendancy. And the same recrudescence of magic and superstition which infected medicine found expression in religious extravagance. Are there no signs to-day that people turn from scientific medicine to quackery? You have, I am glad to say, an organised authority which your profession never attained in the ancient world. But can you, with all that authority and the abundant knowledge which it guards, prevent

recourse to faith-healers and osteopaths and charlatan psycho-analysts? You might retort and ask whether Bishops can prevent the recrudescence of thinly-disguised magic in Christian worship. The sad truth is that we are alike subject to the same pressure of irrational belief. As that great physician, Clifford Allbutt, said to me, in one of the last conversations which I had with him, "When superstition attacks religion, it also attacks medicine." Religion is the first to feel the effects of an uprush of intellectual barbarism. This is natural, for there is in spiritual understanding an emotional element associated with the value-judgments on which all true religion is based. The history, alike of philosophy and theology, shows how difficult it is for humanity to apply reason to the spiritual valuation of human life. Any growing mistrust of reason will therefore show itself rapidly in religious extravagance, and in an indifference to and depreciation of truth. But the same impatience of rational thought will gradually spread to other regions of human endeavour, because there are no absolutely watertight compartments in the human mind. The temper of superstition involves dislike of scientific method. After manifesting itself in religion, it will turn upon scientific medicine, because that is the branch of science most closely concerned with ordinary life. The obscurity which surrounds the influence of the mind upon the body gives many opportunities to irrational belief. If the doctor fails, thinly-veiled magic may succeed: and, when once the idea gains sway that the Universe is non-rational for human thought, scientific progress is doomed.

In my own Church at the present time there is a deplorable reaction from the scientific theology which

was its glory during the last half of the nineteenth century and is still represented by its best theologians. For example, the claim that a priest can endow inanimate matter with spiritual qualities is made with increasing vehemence. Such a claim science can only dismiss as a superstition. After the Renaissance, when the scientific spirit was re-born in Western Europe, all practices based on this claim were, in the Church of England, brought to an end. They and the belief on which they are based are not Christian. They are far older than Christianity, a remnant of the magic of the infancy of civilisation. If the present tendency to go behind the Renaissance to mediæval folk-beliefs prevails in the National Church, the prospect before rational medicine and, indeed, all forms of intellectual progress is gloomy. The whole world to-day is laughing at the State of Tennessee, where religious fanaticism is arrayed against a well-attested scientific theory. But opposition to evolution is no more absurd than the belief that a priest can give spiritual qualities to bread or water or oil.

You must often ask yourselves: Why does superstition make a stronger appeal to-day than half a century ago? Why do apparently well-educated men and women among your patients leave you for self-assertive quacks? There are some obvious reasons. The scientific temper is a recent acquisition of humanity. In comparison with the immense antiquity of the human race, it was born but yesterday. Like all recent acquisitions, its place in our mental make-up is insecure. Then, too, it is exacting in its demands, and men are mentally lazy. Moreover, during the last century science has made such extraordinarily rapid progress that the mass of men are bewildered by the

change of outlook to which it has led. They distrust intellectual novelties, and in the recoil turn to primitive fancies. There is also, at the moment, the disturbing effect of the war which led to psychological distress without a parallel in our recent history. The war created a psychological situation in which mass-suggestion of the crudest kind was unusually potent. Now, in the modern educated world, superstition is really a form of mental disease. Irrational beliefs spread by the power of suggestion which, if sufficiently strong, penetrates the barriers by which reason should prevent their entrance to the mind. Men and women, such as popular novelists, who succeed by appealing to popular fancy, are naturally sensitive to emotional currents in the community. Such yield more readily than others to unreasonable beliefs which gain popular approval and they spread them by their writings. For the same reason religious leaders who are similarly sensitive have their critical faculty inhibited. Without conscious intellectual dishonesty they yield to suggestion, and will make what is really an obsession the basis of elaborate argument.

Unfortunately, it is more easy to explain the spread of false emotionally-coloured ideas than to suggest a remedy. As Græco-Roman civilisation showed, intellectual degeneration may conquer a whole group of peoples. But this probably happens only when the best stocks perish. Civilised progress is maintained not by the many, but by the chosen few. We must trust that Western civilisation will continue to throw up an adequate number of men and women of intellectual strength sufficient to resist irrational emotion. After all, man is a reasoning animal, and

therefore, in the long run, reason will prevail. As the Christian would say, God is both Wisdom and Love. He has made man to think His thoughts no less than to obey His laws; and His purpose will not be frustrated.

But alike in the thought and conduct of men progress and reaction alternate. Human history and prehistory taken together justify the Christian optimism that in the long run progress is sure. But it is certainly not uniform or even approximately steady. We cannot be "short-term" optimists. At present there is little reason to hope that English men and women in the twentieth century will show the good sense of the Victorian era now commonly despised. None the less, whatever the immediate outcome of our efforts may be, we must continue to proclaim our faith in reason, for it is only through the operation of the Divine gift of rational consciousness that we can advance in knowledge of God's work and ways. I personally believe that through such faith in reason we shall be led to accept more whole-heartedly and more intelligently than heretofore the revelation of Christ. Were it not so, I should not be speaking in this place to-day. But I cannot "believe because it is impossible"; nor can I put the fancied welfare of any institution, secular or religious, above loyalty to truth. Your great profession is founded upon such loyalty. A determination to discover truth is the very basis of the scientific method through which medical and surgical knowledge advances. When we recall that the faculties of man, bodily, mental and spiritual, form a Divinely-planned unity, we can affirm that the progress of medical science must serve the cause of true religion. It will be associated with an enrichment

and purification of spiritual understanding; and I believe that amid all change such understanding will continue to be centred on Christ. It was He Who said that "Wisdom is justified of all her children."

XXIII

COMMERCE AS A SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY [1]

THE Union of Educational Institutions is actively engaged in the development of technical and commercial education. It is, therefore, natural that I should invite you to consider the ultimate significance of such types of education. It is sometimes suggested that education of this character merely produces a kind of dexterity which is non-moral. I wish to urge *per contra* that such education is a valuable instrument of social service and, therefore, worthy of the respect and gratitude of the whole community. Technical education is the training of brain, hand and eye. By it we seek to make good workmen, and to turn those who have the requisite natural ability into designers and inventors. In fact, through such education we preserve and develop the mechanical efficiency of industry. Commercial education is the training of the brain so that a man may become expert in one of the many ramifications of modern business. Its results range from the limited knowledge of spelling and business custom which must be associated with the typist's dexterity to an understanding of the intricacies of high finance. Both types of education, therefore, aim at producing efficiency, either mechanical or intellectual. Into neither do ethical considerations

[1] Presidential Address at the Thirtieth Annual Meeting of the Union of Educational Institutions on October 27th, 1925.

directly enter. But it must not be forgotten that each is a discipline, and that all discipline is of moral value. Moreover, although ethical considerations do not directly enter into such types of education, we may rightly contend that each makes for the increased welfare of humanity and that each is thus an instrument of human progress.

At the outset I would remind you that it cannot properly be said that any sort of education, however limited in scope, produces merely human machines. No human being is a mere machine. However highly trained his intellectual or mechanical faculties may be, his moral and spiritual life will continue. His higher aspirations, moreover, will be enriched or impoverished by the use which he makes of his trained powers. If he knows that his trained skill is of value, not only to himself but to his fellows; if he works with an enthusiasm born of the knowledge that his success is of service to the community; then his spiritual life, in the widest sense of the term, will be developed by his work.

Now, as it seems to me, commerce, industry and finance are essential to the increase of the fullness which civilisation brings to human life. I hold, therefore, that those who engage in such pursuits are, to use Christian language, working for the coming of the Kingdom of God, even though they may not understand the ultimate significance of what they are doing. Thus business may be, and indeed ought to be, a side of life in which religious aspiration may find expression. The evil in it is due to the narrow and sordid aims, or to the unscrupulous methods, of those who regard it solely as an opportunity of making money. There is widespread belief that ruthless self-interest is

an essential element in our commercial system; and it is undeniable that harsh selfishness based on mere greed is responsible for the many evils of modern industrialism. But it is equally true that similar selfishness is the cause of most of our social ills. There is no more reason why the business man should put money-making before social service than that the lawyer should put money-making before justice. The business man, like the lawyer, deserves our respect just so far as he seeks the higher aim of his profession. Only because greed is wrongly regarded as the mainspring of commercial life do men denounce the abstraction which they call Capitalism.

To get a right estimate of the part played by commerce in human life we need to consider the origin and function of our capitalist system. We shall, I believe, be led to the conclusion that industry, commerce and finance are all essential to civilised progress because together they combine to increase human welfare.

A few simple definitions will assist us at the outset. The making of things which men need is industry. Commerce is the distribution of those things to the people who need them. Finance is the machine by which commerce is regulated. Let us pass from these definitions to remember that man's needs increase with his civilisation. It is true that a man's life does not consist in the abundance of the things which he possesses. But, while a bare minimum of food, clothing and shelter suffice for the savage, it would be intolerable privation to the civilised man to lack many things that the savage has never possessed. These things give variety and beauty to human life. They make it richer and more wholesome. We can rightly praise

the simple life which is free from harmful or useless luxuries. But a bare life, which is empty of the things which give decent comfort and healthy pleasure, is a stunted existence. For instance, our instinctive desire for cleanliness makes us demand an elaborate provision of good water and sewers and domestic sanitation. Travel enlarges our sympathies and understanding. Knowledge needs its tools. Let us admit that some labour is given to the production of luxuries which had better not be created. But the fact remains that by far the greater part of human labour adds to human welfare. For this reason practically everybody admits that he who makes things serves the community. He performs a valuable social service. Labour deserves our gratitude.

But useful service is given to the community by many who do not work with their hands. The inventor and the discoverer work hard and have enormously enriched humanity. The teacher works hard in spreading the knowledge by which humanity preserves the achievements of civilisation. The work of the physician and surgeon is under-valued by none who have needed their services. The value of such forms of labour is universally admitted. But, as I have already indicated, many doubt whether commerce is equally a form of labour worthy of our esteem. And it is often suggested that the financial machinery of commerce—in a word, capitalism—is positively harmful.

I believe that such an attitude arises partly from envy, partly from lack of understanding, and more especially from dislike of the unrestrained cupidity which sometimes finds an outlet in our commerce and finance. But, nevertheless, commerce is a service to

the community which is as necessary as production itself, and the elaborate organisation of modern banking and finance is merely the machinery through which commerce works. As soon as men began to exchange things by the device of money, finance came into being; and commerce has necessarily developed as labour has become more specialised and its products ever more widely exchanged. In certain areas things which men need can be most advantageously produced. On the good wheat lands of Canada and the Argentine wheat is grown. Where coal and iron ore lie near at hand iron and steel industries grow up. Technical skill will be developed in a certain locality and will there become a tradition of craftsmanship, as with the jewellery trade in Birmingham, or the cotton industry in South Lancashire. The different goods must be exchanged, however far apart the localities from which they come. Commerce effects the exchange. Without commerce we in Birmingham might have a surfeit of beautiful jewellery and empty stomachs.

Now the fundamental object of modern industry is to increase the productiveness of human labour. To this end men are given the training which produces special aptitude. With the same object machines of all sorts have been devised. The aggregate effect is to increase the supply of goods which we desire and at the same time to decrease human drudgery. Labour thus becomes more productive. It is found that what is called mass-production aids this process. In popular language, it makes things cheaper. But the greater the amount of stuff produced in any one area the more widely it must be distributed. Thus the need for commerce continually grows. And commercial enter-

prise calls for all sorts of subordinate developments. It is not enough to make a good thing; you must make it known. So the perfectly legitimate business of advertising has grown up. There must, moreover, be a continuous adjustment in the value of the money-tokens used by various people: so foreign exchange business has become a fine art. Arrangements, moreover, must be made to tide over the time which elapses between the sending of goods and the receiving of payment for them. Similarly, when a great factory is built the labour spent on it is not at once productive. The banks in each case must finance enterprise. The tokens which represent so much accumulated labour are spent that further labour may become more productive. The whole business of commerce and finance is thus not an artificial creation; it is necessary in order that modern industry may be possible. Capitalism is not an invention of the Devil; it is the natural outcome of the endeavour to increase the supply of goods men need without adding to human drudgery. And its use in this endeavour has been enormously successful. If we could go back to the Middle Ages we should find the dirt and discomfort, the bareness and meanness of life, intolerable. Industry, commerce and finance, a trinity in unity based on human invention and discovery, have raised the whole standard of human life.

There is much in modern civilisation which every thoughtful man must deplore. The undeserved hardships of the poor affront our sense of social justice. Inequalities of fortune are admittedly too great. But it is absurd to pretend that the poor were better off in the mediæval town, with its stench and disease, its misery, ignorance and vice. We should not be so

discontented with our social order were we not certain that we can make it better than it is. We only need to use more intelligently and skilfully the apparatus for social progress which has been created by our commercial system. The men who have made the system have made possible an almost immeasurable increase in human well-being.

Why then is there a widespread dislike of commercial magnates and bankers? As we try to answer this question we must remember that success in commerce may lead to vast fortune. It is true that the fortune has almost certainly been built up by reducing the cost of some commodity which the public desires. The man who has made it has thus given to the public a share of his energy, ability and courage. The whole community, for instance, gains by the cheap motor-cars which make the fortune of the millionaire. But great wealth can be a social danger. He who has it may do much harm by spending it unwisely. Even if he spend it well he has by virtue of its possession a power over the lives of possibly thousands of men and women such as no one else in a modern democracy possesses. Bankers are disliked for a somewhat similar reason. They may not be personally rich men; but they control vast wealth, and it is thought that they control for their own ends and not for the public good. Amateur economists suggest that a golden age might begin if only bankers would change their financial policy. It is forgotten that such a policy is the product of hard experience. The banker must restrict credit when over-trading begins; the goods which stand behind his credit are valueless when no one will buy them. In fact, he is not an autocrat; he is enmeshed within

a network of limitations invisible to the amateur but rigid as steel. The prince of commerce is similarly subject to forces which he must not ignore. Success is only preserved by steady wisdom and care. In " big business " nothing succeeds like success ; but the permanence of success is never assured. Probably the public gain directly and indirectly far more by allowing freedom of commercial enterprise than would result from State control. Progress is thus more rapid because labour more quickly becomes increasingly productive when it is led by men of commercial genius who work in comparative freedom. The dead hand of bureaucratic control in a Socialist state would retard such development as has markedly changed for the better during the last hundred years the conditions of human life among the white races. It is, of course, true that we need to control the ruthlessness of commercial buccaneers. Our factory legislation recognised such necessity too tardily. Other legislation has sprung from a recognition that monopolies need stringent control. And, of course, the " death duties " of modern times constitute a very heavy inheritance tax which hinders the continued increase of vast wealth. In fact, more has been done than many admit to check abuses in what is called " society organised upon a capitalist basis." Abuses there are. They will continue so long as men ignore moral considerations in business. Predatory skill finds its opportunity in commerce and still more often in the shady finance which preys on legitimate trade. But we get a false impression of modern commerce if we pay attention only to the evils within it and forget the steady, sober, conscientious trade which brings such benefits to us all. The honesty and high principle

of the best type of business man, his care for his *employees*, his use of his wealth for the public good—such are by no means rare fruits of our commercial system. They make our commerce a thing to be proud of. Moreover, they are not chance by-products of business life. They arise naturally because business is service to the community. A boy may choose the technical side of industry. If he can invent or discover some way of enriching human life by diminishing human drudgery, he benefits mankind. If he merely preserves knowledge and skill that have been gained in the past, he does well. Or he may go into commerce. There, if successful, he may spread among a multitude of people increased welfare by cheapening some commodity. And if he remains a private in the ranks, he is no parasite upon society, but a labourer worthy of his hire. Honesty, fidelity, courage, brave endurance are needed in commerce as in every walk of life. They make for the best kind of success—the esteem of one's fellow-men. The day has long passed when the cloister was deemed the right way of serving God. We serve God as we serve our fellows; and he who contributes to lessen the brutishness and bare misery which not seldom has been the lot of the mass of men in the past is not unworthy of Divine approbation.

XXIV

SCIENCE AND MODERN HUMANISM [1]

I WISH to speak to you to-day of the necessity of science as an instrument of education. To this end I invite you to consider the extent to which science has, practically within the last century, changed the whole background of our thought. I wish to urge that science, by giving us a new knowledge of man's origin and place in the Universe, has become a most important factor in humane studies. Because it has caused the whole range of human activity to be seen in a new light, it has created a new humanism which differs from the "enlightenment" of the eighteenth century almost as widely as the humanism of the Renaissance differed from mediæval scholasticism. The new humanism is, of course, a product of the scientific method which was first manifested after the Dark Ages in Roger Bacon and successfully established its power after the Renaissance. Yet the knowledge won by that method has been recently so great in amount, and so revolutionary in its character, that we have lately entered into a new world of thought. In urging the value of the scientific teaching to which you devote your lives I would contend that, in spite of the ills produced by the change in human life which applied science has made possible, it remains

[1] Presidential Address to the Science Masters' Association on Tuesday, January 5th, 1926.

true that science is ultimately beneficent and not brutal. I invite you to consider what might happen to human progress if the retrogression of classical civilisation were repeated, and the severe discipline of scientific method were once again discarded by mankind. And I trust that you will pardon me if I try to indicate how the new humanism, of which you are the servants, is related to the traditional philosophic-religious outlook of Western Europe.

I need hardly remind you that science has crept gradually and almost stealthily into the curriculum of our public schools. By the old "Greek Play" headmasters it was regarded with somewhat of the mixture of irritation and contemptuous tolerance that we give to an intrusive cat. They found it an expensive subject, demanding specially equipped rooms and costly apparatus. They associated it, not with culture, but with low forms of mechanical dexterity and nauseous smells. "Bottle-washing" and "stinks" expressed in schoolboy language the prevailing attitude of mind of unfriendly critics.

And now the old order has passed away. Science no longer fights for recognition. It has established itself in modern education. The change might have come about because of the utility of applied science in modern industry. In that event, we should have apologised for a development which, though natural, was not wholly desirable. But no teacher of science need now think it necessary to offer excuses for the place which his subject takes in a modern educational curriculum. He feels instinctively that the outlook created by modern science is too important to be ignored. We are not properly educated unless in the

background of our thought there lies the conception of the Universe which has been fashioned by men of science. Modern science has put man and his activities into a wholly new setting. Every department of human thought feels the influence of the new knowledge. The outlook of our grandparents, the postulates of their thinking, have become incredibly remote. New vistas in space and time have of late spread themselves before us. They are like the wider horizons which spread before the boy who for the first time climbs the mountain which overshadows his village home. Man has suddenly reached a new understanding of his origin and place in the physical Universe, a new understanding of the nature and extent of that Universe. He knows himself to be the product of processes whose duration is conveniently measured by the unit of a million years. The distances which a modern astronomer puts before him in describing the galactic sub-Universe to which he belongs are incredible: the unit is a light-year, some six million-million miles. In that Universe our sun is one among some two thousand million stars. There appear to be other sub-Universes in the Universe which the astronomer observes. Their distance is calculated to extend to a million light-years. And yet all available evidence points to the fact that the Universe is finite. Nay more, it had a beginning and will have an end. . . . Gone is the time when man could believe that his earth was of central significance in the Universe. Gone is the time when man could believe that he was not akin to other forms of life upon the earth. Such ideas have passed away, never to return unless our civilisation is destroyed by our follies and crimes. And it is scientific method which,

with amazing rapidity, has given us our enlarged understanding.

What is the value of such knowledge as a part of human culture ? It is sometimes urged that it is of little use to give a boy or girl instruction in the elements of physics and chemistry, of zoology and applied mathematics. Such knowledge, we are reminded, will probably be forgotten in later years, while the sympathetic appreciation of a few masterpieces of poetry and drama will remain as a permanent factor in emotional life. None of us would deny the inspiring and lasting value of the training by which we are led to admire great work in literature and art. The most hardened scientist, who in youth has been touched by the beauty and pathos of human striving and achievement, feels a thrill when he reads Milton's eulogy of Athens : " the eye of Greece, mother of arts and eloquence." He has lost much unless he remains sensitive to her lofty, grave tragedians who :

> " treat
> Of fate and chance and change in human life,
> High actions and high passions best describing."

It is probably also true that the man of science, when he steps back for a moment from some investigation which has absorbed his whole activity, feels that he has missed the fullness of human existence. He has not drunk as deep as others of the water of life. It is only too true that science is an exacting mistress. He who serves her can enjoy but few of the manifold gifts and graces of the human spirit, for life is short and new truth hard to win. Did not Newton sum up his unparalleled achievements by an echo of Milton's line :

> " Children gathering pebbles on the shore " ?

We admit, then, that rational inquiry into physical and biological phenomena—and this is what we mean when we speak of modern science—that such inquiry cannot, as an instrument of education, replace what are traditionally called humane studies. None the less, an appreciation of the nature of scientific method must henceforth form a part of our educational system: it is indeed essential to modern humanism. Every educated man and woman ought to have an understanding of the system of observation, experiment, theory and verification by which modern science has gained its triumphs. We may grant that the details of such elementary scientific knowledge as can be taught in our schools will usually be forgotten. But we can by such teaching establish the belief that nature is knowable, and give an understanding of the way in which the human mind reaches accurate knowledge of phenomena. The value of scientific teaching is that it persuades men that the Universe is rational and convinces them that the picture of it presented by modern science is the result of rational inquiry. Men, in the mass, are mentally inert. Superstitions which belong to primitive animism enter into the mental constitution of all of us. Most of our ideas come to us by what the psychologists call "suggestion": we accept them uncritically because others hold them. If the modern scientific outlook on the Universe is accepted in this uncritical fashion it may be associated with all sorts of puerile beliefs, because in neither case will it be recognised that theories need to be tested by the critical judgment of reason. A training in scientific method is necessary to establish the principle that all theories and beliefs concerning physical and biological phenomena must

be tested by the results of experimental inquiry. Only in this way can we guard against the persistence and spread of an anti-scientific temper which, if it prevailed, would lead to a progressive degeneration of human thought. The possibility of such degeneration is often ignored. It seems absurd to draw attention to it in an era of astonishingly rapid scientific progress. But we have to remember that scientific method arose among the Ionian Greeks in the sixth century B.C. It at once became amazingly fertile in such subjects as astronomy and medicine. But, because there was no popular scientific education, the folk-beliefs of the populace gradually overwhelmed it. Two centuries before the barbarians flooded into the Roman Empire rational science was ignored. Primitive conceptions of the Universe prevailed. You could choose between a three-story picture of hell, earth and heaven or some fantasy of heavenly spheres rotating round the earth. And medicine was contaminated by magical remedies against disease. "Before the process was ended," says Dr. Singer,[1] "learned and Christian physicians had attached their names to material as mean and debased as any which the field-anthropologist has elicited from the lore of the lowest savages." I do not know if our greatest living authority on the history of medicine would agree with me, yet I venture to suggest that not Christianity, but lack of scientific education was the cause of the decline. Christianity in the early centuries of its existence was shaped, as every religion is always shaped, by the ideas of the peoples among whom it spread. Originally a purely spiritual and

[1] In his article on *Ancient Medicine*, in *Science and Civilisation*, edited by F. S. Marvin (1923), p. 71.

highly ethical faith, it absorbed pre-Christian and magical beliefs. When scientific method was reborn at the Renaissance, critical inquiry was quickly applied to the diverse elements of existing ecclesiastical dogma and religious practice. By the consequences of the ensuing explosion we have not yet ceased to be troubled.

I deliberately draw attention to the reaction of science on religious belief because I would insist that science is now, and must for civilised men continue to be, an essential element in human culture. Science not only gives us a picture of the Universe in which all man's spiritual faculties must find a place, but it also helps us the better to understand ourselves and our fellow-men.

The principle of evolution is now firmly established —as the world's laughter at Tennessee has within recent months amply demonstrated. Originally a biological theory, it is now the unifying factor in anthropology, and its influence on psychology is great and growing. Man is not merely in his physical conformation one of the mammals, a developed off-shoot of some ape-like stock. It is recognised that his mind is an evolutionary product of the inter-action between his ancestry and its environment. The intelligence of civilised man is the outcome of something like one or two million years of human and sub-human growth. Not merely do animal instincts and passions survive in us, but the structure of our mind retains traces of an incredibly distant animal past. Our susceptibility to psychological suggestion is akin to the herd-instinct which sways gregarious animals. Whenever emotional upset sets men " voyaging through strange seas of thought,

alone," primitive mental processes assert their vitality; and we go back to the second century of our era to find a parallel to the crazy necromancy, astrology and magic that flourish to-day. We are thus reminded that our civilisation is fragile because the finest and latest spiritual understanding reached by the human mind is insecurely held. It is the older acquisitions of humanity which are firmly embedded in our mental make-up. We have, therefore, to reckon with atavistic reversions: the recrudescence of mental processes which existed countless millennia ago. So sober a thinker as Rivers[1] speculated that the dissociation of personality, which occasionally occurs in human beings, may be a throw-back to the time when our ancestors were amphibians, creatures whose land and water life demanded such mental dualism. Evolutionary psychology is still in its scientific infancy. Of the pre-history of man we know little, though our knowledge is rapidly growing. But such sciences help us to know ourselves. They give us a more penetrating insight into human civilisation. They will in due course enable mankind to strengthen its social fabric. Already we see that, to this end, we must check the multiplication of degenerate racial stocks. But practical action must wait until we have a fuller knowledge of the causes and inheritability of human degeneracy.

Such knowledge can only be won by scientific method. Just so far as the principles of scientific method prevail we can look to the future with hope. It is not necessary that all men or all women should

[1] W. H. R. Rivers, *Instinct and the Unconscious* (Cambridge University Press, 1920), p. 80. The significance of such speculative inquiries of Rivers deserves emphasis.

become experts in one branch of science; but they ought to have the scientific temper. That temper expresses itself in a readiness to accept the conclusions reached by rational inquiry into phenomena and in a refusal to accept theories which will not stand the test of such inquiry. We must apply these principles universally, even to the phenomena of the religious consciousness. I do not think that true religion will suffer if what I have termed the scientific temper prevails. We have almost forgotten the absurd contention that, if man be a developed ape, there can be nothing in him but what the ape possessed. We know that evolution is characterised by the emergence of new things—of, perhaps I may be permitted to say, new degrees of reality. Where they come from we do not know. The nature of the Power behind the evolutionary process and the Source of the creative activity which we observe, are not objects of scientific inquiry. But the moral qualities and spiritual faculties of man exist. By virtue of them he is a religious being who attempts to explain their origin and meaning, and to develop them because he knows that they are good. Science can help by destroying false rationalisations of religious experience. It can purify religion by divesting it of accretions which linger from pre-scientific times.

Science has already banished irrational fear from the minds of educated men by giving them a right understanding of phenomena. There is order in the cosmos; events are not caused by dæmons "hostile to men," capricious, vindictive and terrible. The storm and the lightning can be explained. The spirits of the dead have no power over the living. The "bad dream" is not due to some malevolent supernatural

being. The tabu is useless unless reason can justify it as a social convention. The witch and her familiar have gone: we gaze with pity on a half-demented old woman whose proper place is a mental home. Science has banished irrational fear from its own domain. But it must fight to hold its territory. Primitive animism was once, so far as we can tell, universal. Belief in evil spirits persists in many of the lower races of humanity. If regard for scientific method should decay, such belief would revive among ourselves.

Science has also banished the gods. The Universe is a unity and not subject to the control of independent super-personalities. All things work together, are inter-related, parts of an organic whole. The observed sequences of phenomena are not arbitrary or discordant. Science is built on the postulate of the uniformity of nature, and its triumphs show that its postulate is sound. I believe that as soon as we pass from invariable sequence to the conception of cause and effect we must further postulate Purpose in the Universe and assume that the whole is subject to one intelligent Will. But most certainly we cannot allow that a multiplicity of Wills controls the machinery of which we are products.

Science has banished the gods. Has it banished God? In effect it has done this if Pantheism or Naturalism be the interpretation of the Universe to which it leads. But I cannot see that any such interpretation is necessary or even probable. That the Universe is a self-acting machine is to me an incredible assumption. If we make the assumption we are entirely unable to account for the emergence of man's spiritual faculties. If, on the other hand, we

identify God with His Universe, good and evil are alike divine: our moral intuitions are meaningless. Now one of the great affirmations of modern science is that we must not separate man from the Universe. He is part of it, a product of the activity manifested in its ceaseless change. Moreover, man's mind is akin to the universal mind: otherwise the processes of nature would not yield to rational human inquiry. And, if man belongs to the whole scheme, his spiritual faculties must be a part of the scheme. Goodness, beauty and truth must of necessity find a place in our interpretation of the Universe. So, as I see the matter, Naturalism and Pantheism do not adequately explain the cosmos to which man belongs. An interpretation which takes full account of the emergence of man with his moral and spiritual intuitions is only given by ethical Theism. Not only do all things work together, but they "work together for good to them that love God."

Science, then, does not, to my thinking, banish God. Neither does it banish the conception of the Kingdom of God, as formulated by the Founder of Christianity. The belief in a Golden Age in some past time has been held by many races. The Jews put such an age at the dawn of human history; and the belief was taken over by the Christian Church, though no warrant for it can be found in the teaching of Christ. It was consequently widespread in Europe until scientific method led to acceptance of the doctrine of evolution. We are now convinced that human civilisation, as we know it, is not a product of the degeneration of some past state of human perfection: it is the slowly-evolving consequence of the acquisition by man of spiritual understanding. The ethical part

of such understanding is shaped by man's social needs. We may say that it originates in those needs and is thus an outcome of man's environment, though its ultimate source, I would contend, must be the Power which created alike man and his surroundings. But, whatever be our religious philosophy, evolution describes the emergence in man of the spiritual perception on which human civilisation rests. Man is slowly entering the Kingdom of the good, the beautiful and the true. He is instinctively, though with grievous failures, seeking to create on earth the Kingdom of God. Progress achieved in the past gives us sound reason to hope that further progress, to which we can assign no limit, will continue in the future. The process, so far as we can see, will be slow and by no means uniform. We delude ourselves by extravagant optimism if we think that immediately "there's a good time coming." But the fact remains that the Kingdom of God is an ideal realm for which, and to which, humanity struggles. Science, it may justly be said, gives us no assurance that the ideal will ever be reached on earth and no hope that, if reached, it would be permanent. Alike for the individual and the race it is certain that here we have no abiding city. But is the ideal not the ultimately real? Is the earthly kingdom of our hopes and aspirations not a shadow in space and time of an eternal Kingdom in some spiritual realm? I confess that it seems to me that man strives here for that which he will attain hereafter. The spiritual interpretation which I give to the Universe leads me to a belief in the permanence of spiritual values, to a conviction that human personality in which those values are manifested will not be destroyed. When we ask her

verdict on such speculations, science is silent. She can answer none of the ultimate questions that we put to her. They are not in her province. She deals with the world of sense-observation, tells us of sequences in physical and biological phenomena, and leaves us speculating as to the Reality which binds them together. But, though her range is limited, she leads us within that range from error to truth, from phantasy to fact. On the truth which she has revealed, and is still revealing, we build the new humanism of our age.

XXV

THE PRESENT RELIGIOUS SITUATION IN ENGLAND [1]

I KNOW of no subject of more interest to members of all branches of Christ's Church in this country than the religious situation in England to-day. We are the heirs of four centuries of religious striving and argument for which the Reformation opened the flood-gates. Our different communions owe their existence in part to the differences of organisation and doctrine to which past controversies led and in part to the free development of spiritual enthusiasm and understanding. Many of the old divisions have now become obsolete; between many of the Free Churches, sundered by their heritage, there remains no essential dividing-line. Within all the Churches new types of division have appeared, typified by the words Fundamentalism and Modernism. In fact to the superficial observer organised British Christianity presents the appearance of vast disruption and confusion. Naturally there are those who feel strongly the need of order and would welcome a return to the days when the iron hand of ecclesiastical authority enforced nominal unity. No such return is possible. Religious freedom was the inevitable outcome of the method and spirit of the Reformation, though many of the Reformers did not perceive the fact. Men differ in temper, ability,

[1] An Address at Westminster College, Cambridge, on Commemoration Day, June 10th, 1926.

knowledge, and spiritual insight. Spiritual allegiance must be sincere or it is worthless. If sincere it must be unforced. It must result from education, persuasion, example. All that any particular religious communion can do is to resist such changes within itself as it deems harmful to its own witness to truth. If the result is the formation of a separate religious organisation the ultimate value of that body to the moral and spiritual life of the community will measure the extent to which it merits Divine approbation. Few new religious movements are free from some element of error or of misguided enthusiasm. But if they have free development they tend to purify themselves from extravagance or, if their basis be essentially irrational, they die out. Wesley, the greatest spiritual leader that the English race has thrown up, was not free from marked intellectual limitations; yet the great communions which he called into being have quietly set his mistakes aside. On the other hand the Non-jurors, who at the beginning were led by men of undoubted piety and distinction, practically vanished in a couple of generations. Their doctrine of the Divine Right of Kings was essentially irrational. The voice of the people is not the voice of God; but the familiar proverb emphasises that in the Divine scheme of the Universe good sense wins victories greater than the religious pessimist expects.

Moreover, no Church retains unaltered the practical content of its faith. Pressure for change is continuous, and change is accepted even by the most conservative of ecclesiastical organisations. If intellectual freedom is proscribed by ecclesiastical authority the type of change allowed is that which increases the popular influence—the power or wealth—of the organisation.

The Mediæval Church thus absorbed and utilised the semi-pagan instincts of the people and especially of the Iberian stocks of South-Western Europe. In the history of Roman theology we can trace the uneasy attempts of theologians to mitigate the crudity, while sanctioning the entrance into the official system, of pre-Christian pagan beliefs. From the deplorable practical abuses which ensued the Reformation was the protest of the Nordic races. Religious freedom may be dangerous to uniformity of doctrine or organisation, but it is essential to true spiritual progress. And, moreover, lack of uniformity is by no means synonymous with lack of spiritual unity. We can keep a truer balance between the essential and the non-essential elements in our belief and practice when we see others who differ from us in certain points showing, through the religious life which their communions nourish, the fruits of the spirit of Christ. The Society of Friends exists as a standing protest against the doctrine that the Sacraments are absolutely necessary to Salvation. No fair-minded man could examine the contribution made by the Presbyterians to Christian civilisation and assert that episcopacy, however convenient and sanctioned by long tradition, was essential in Christ's Church.

I very much doubt whether the so-called religious chaos of countries where the Reformation triumphed is the unmixed evil which it is sometimes alleged to be. The situation constitutes a continuous challenge to men who regard it aright, forcing them to seek truth, to avoid narrow bigotry, to discriminate important principles from fanciful prejudices. There can, moreover, be the sympathy and friendly regard between members of different communions which indicates the

sort of unity really worth having. From such sympathetic understanding a common mind can be evolved from which formal unity may result. We see this process now taking place in many places among the English-speaking peoples. The rigid dogmatic systems of the past, Calvinism, the Thirty-nine Articles and the Westminster Confession equally with the formulæ of the Council of Trent have ceased to be adequate. They can no longer satisfy men whose outlook has changed because of the rapid growth of human knowledge in recent centuries. Their disintegration makes alike for disruption and for unity. Disruption is manifest in the growth of sub-Christian and non-Christian religious systems. Unity shows itself in the development of what we may best call Christian humanism. It is more usually described as Evangelical Christianity because of the importance within it of the ethical teaching of Christ. But it is essentially a combination of Christ's teaching as to the nature of God and of our duty as His children with the knowledge of man's place in the Universe which modern science has reached. In thus formulating a new presentation of Christianity the leaders of Christian thought who see the need of the process are following the great example of Origen. He sought during the first half of the third century to combine the Gospel with the best thought of his time. On his success classical theology was built. It is true that the Church never canonised Origen and ultimately repudiated some of his theories. But he indicated the sort of range which Christian theology, to be adequate, must cover; he made possible a synthesis between the precepts and story of the Gospel and Greek speculative thought. Work on such lines virtually ceased with the destruction of classical

civilisation. The systems of the Middle Ages represented a new departure which, for all its subtlety and ingenuity, was inherently more barbaric. It is fair so to describe these systems because the cruel temper and popular superstitions of the time were reflected in its theology. The rose-coloured pictures of Mediævalism, with which ecclesiastical reaction has made us familiar, are being destroyed by accurate investigation. They only became possible because the mediæval architects were great; and some of their finest work has survived for everybody to admire. But artistic genius, even though placed at the service of an enormously wealthy Church, is no guarantee of the prevalence of lofty morality or spiritual vigour. Rousseau and his friends, reacting from conditions in France which led to the Revolution, idealised the unspoiled child of nature; but the ways of the primitive savage are nasty and brutish. Our Romanticists are indignant at the tawdriness and drabness of modern industrialism; but life as it was in the Middle Ages we should rightly find intolerable. Superstition, vice, cruelty, disease and dirt were far more prevalent than now. I believe that Christian humanism is more practically effective in this country to-day than ever in our past.

Yet there is profound discontent, not least among those responsible for the direction and organisation of various branches of the Christian Church. We have built up a costly and well-planned system of universal education, yet seldom has religious unreason been so vocal. We have enormously reduced the death-rate among children, yet the less valuable stocks in the community are increasing faster than those which ought to be preserved. We have made great experi-

ments in state-socialism, yet industrial unrest is chronic.

One might easily extend the list of such disquieting paradoxes. There are in them causes for grave apprehension. But our discontent would not be so great were our hopes and ideals less high and firmly held. The situation, moreover, has truly satisfactory features. Religious unreason is vocal, but we do not burn witches at the stake. The good order of our recent National Strike compares most favourably with the horrors of a Peasants' Rising and its suppression. We can contrast our sewage systems and supplies of good water with the stench and endemic disease of a mediæval town. Machines have lessened human drudgery and given the opportunity of leisure and reflection. In fact our discontent exists because we know the greatness of our achievements and are conscious that they could be put to far better use than we make of them. Ours is the discontent of optimists and not the dull despair of which afflicts a decaying civilisation.

I believe that recognition of this fact is the key to the religious situation in England to-day. The Churches are criticised because so much is expected of them. Far from deeming religion a mere sedative, men and women feel instinctively that in Christianity there is a spiritual power which organised communions fail to utilise. Young men of quality do not enter our ministries in sufficient numbers because other occupations afford opportunities of religious service which are more attractive. Hence among our recruits there are too many youths of crude and unimaginative piety. But when the present turmoil ceases, as it will sooner or later, the need of the influence of organised religion and the value of the trained Christian teacher will be

more clearly perceived. I am convinced that, before long, the new presentation of the Gospel, which is now being fashioned by our leading thinkers, will establish itself. A new *Zeitgeist* will then be created.

I doubt if we realise the strength of the influence on the mass of men of the *Zeitgeist* or "spirit of the age." The psychologist recognises the fact when he affirms that the process technically termed "suggestion" is much more potent than reasoned argument. We can verify the fact by turning over a chance bundle of old religious handbooks. Fairly accurately we can date each by its contents. The works of the masters of religious thought alone have a relatively timeless quality: the rest reflect the popular religious feeling of their age. If I may take an illustration from Anglicanism, the High Church handbooks of the end of last century are already *passés*. Our modern Anglo-Catholic literature will soon be profusely strewn on second-hand bookstalls. The *Zeitgeist* changes.

At the moment the wave of sacerdotalism is obviously breaking. That wave is a singularly good illustration of the way in which the spirit of the age leads men to violent reactions. Social reactions are more rapid than religious, as is illustrated by the present rather foolish contempt for Victorian standards. But in religion, as the enthusiasm which created a movement or a system dies away, its defects become more slowly apparent. Spiritual vitality escapes. Phrases become consecrated but lose their quickening appeal. The heat and light depart leaving petrified complacency. And a new generation turns impatiently away, searching from some quite different quarter for the life of the spirit.

The eighteenth century revival was the greatest

spiritual movement which England has experienced since the Reformation. But how severely a man like Dean Church criticised its representatives of a century ago ! The intellectual limitations of the movement had then become apparent to thoughtful men. Its social sympathies were blunted. Its unctuous phrases, as Dickens saw clearly, could garb a selfish hypocrisy. The Napoleonic wars and the industrial revolution had led to rapid religious deterioration. Externals persisted but spiritual vitality had decayed. From ugliness, ignorance and coldness there was a natural revolt. The Romantic Revival directed it into the channels of emotional fancy. A decade before the Oxford Movement began Edward Irving showed the set of the tide in the development which led to his Catholic Apostolic Church. The Catholic reaction began.

Why was the recoil so markedly reactionary that in the English Church it has led to an enthusiasm for mediæval sacramental theories which are plainly irrational ? One might have expected that the patristic learning of the Tractarians would, as in Bishop Lightfoot, have naturally been combined with modern scholarship to evolve a progressive theology. One might further have expected that into such a development the Christian Socialism of Maurice and his friends would have been absorbed. The nineteenth century would then have witnessed a reformation of English religion as significant and as valuable as that which was made three centuries earlier. I believe that those who come after us will see such a Reformation during the present century. But why the delay ?

Even the finest types of religion have in them

a strongly emotional element; they are based both on reason and on feeling. Whenever new knowledge shows the inadequacy of an old and accepted system of religious thought, the mass of men do not think out a fresh position. They either lapse into blank scepticism or allow irrational fancies to prevail. And the fancies to which they turn are those which have swayed their distant ancestors. The past is embedded in the mental make-up of us all. Old superstitions will spring to life if they get the chance. So the appeal to Catholic antiquity becomes the acceptance of pre-Christian religious cults slightly veneered. Sacred shrines and healing fountains where the goddess has shown herself become objects of pilgrimage; we have gone back to the dawn of human history. The witch of Endor emerges once more. Some find satisfaction in her revelations. Others denounce her for trafficking with evil spirits. Those who value reason can only view with dismay the folly and pity of it all.

It is related that Bishop Butler, the famous author of *The Analogy*, was once walking at night in his garden with Dean Tucker when he put the question, whether nations might not go mad as well as individuals. In other words, are there any limits to the power of irrational suggestion at times of religious ferment? He would be a bold man who would dare to answer this question. But we can say with confidence that in the long run reason is stronger than fancy. Superstitions can revive and spread with disquieting rapidity; but their ultimate decay is certain in a civilisation which has not exhausted its capacity for development. When they decay, people no longer trouble to argue about them. They have lost their significance.

The incalculable factor in the religious future of England is the development of universal education and of the popular newspapers which such education has brought into existence. All our people can now read and write. All believe that they have the capacity for accurate thought; but, in fact, few are qualified to separate true spiritual understanding from disguised relics of religious barbarism. The best religious thought of our time tends to be swamped by popular cults which are well exploited.

I think that we must expect for a time a succession of popular sub-Christian revivals of primitive religion. Concurrently with them there will be a reformulation of the Christian faith which it will be the duty of organised Christian communions to make and preserve. This better sort of influence will spread through school-teachers and journalists to the community as a whole. To the leaders of the Churches we must, in the main, look for constructive thought. But it will be purveyed to the people as a whole far more by the school-teacher and the journalist than by the mission-preacher of former epochs. I doubt if we shall again get a religious revival of the eighteenth-century type. Perhaps great "wireless" preachers will emerge whose fame will rival that of the "film" favourites. But, now that education is so widespread, the purely emotional appeal will be inadequate. The preacher will have to build on a framework which scholars and men of science have fashioned, if his message is to be of permanent value. Confident appeals of the ignorant to the ignorant, and of those who like to toy with superstition to those who are greedy for it—such will continue. But the slow pressure of educated opinion will prevail against them. A new standard attitude

or, if you prefer the phrase, a new orthodoxy will gradually be shaped. Those who have grown up under its influence will stoutly affirm that it is the old orthodoxy, the faith once delivered to the saints, because they have known no other. Those who have the historic sense know that orthodoxy is always changing. They smile at the awkward efforts of those among us to-day who no longer dare to challenge the doctrine of evolution, but profess to maintain intact the old scheme of Catholic belief with which that doctrine is incompatible.

From the new outlook—now loosely called Modernism—will emerge the orthodoxy of the future. Of the triumph of that outlook there can be no question. I see no reason to believe that it will weaken faith in Christ's teaching as to God's nature and man's duty. Neither do I think that the corollary of this teaching—personal immortality realised as Eternal Life—will seem less cogent. And as men are led to accept the theology of Christ, and as the veneration for His character, so characteristic of our age, continues to be an inspiration, belief in the Incarnation will become stronger and more reasonable. Rashdall was a typical Modernist pioneer and a man in whom outstanding ability was combined with honest piety; his Christology was essentially that of the Fourth Gospel. I think that Rashdall's philosophic position will, with slight variations, be generally accepted by those who have leisure and ability to occupy themselves with such problems. I fear, however, that the doctrine of the Trinity will continue to be popularly expounded as a sort of tritheism to be accepted as a mystery of faith.

So long as Christ's theology and the system of

Christian ethics derived from it remain central in men's religious outlook, as I am convinced it will remain in the new orthodoxy, we need not be apprehensive as to the outcome of the present era of religious change. Christian communions will be troubled by the Fundamentalists and Mediævalists; but established religious organisations are tough and can survive much internal dissension. Only when the hierarchy is so powerful and the system so closely knit that freedom of thought can be stamped out is there danger that reaction can triumph. Fortunately such a system can only be made effective with a celibate priesthood. A good and honest man who has a wife and family dependent upon him is almost invincible because of the human sympathy which his oppression would create. Even for a Church where obsolete beliefs can be effectively maintained there is no happy prospect. Such a Church must set itself against the general tide of thought of the community and fight a losing battle as it tries to keep the minds of its members closed to all ideas which it is unwilling to accept. If a Church of this type represents the extreme right wing of the religious situation, the extreme left is made up of a varied bundle of fantastic systems. In these, bred by luxuriant fancy out of confusion, there is usually a genuine element of religious piety. Some variants of theosophy are singularly like the Gnosticism of the second century of our era. Mrs. Eddy's metaphysics I decline to criticise, for I can make neither head nor tail of it. All such movements can have but a temporary vogue; they lack the rational unity necessary for permanence. But as they decay we may expect others to arise in their stead, until we gradually reach religious stability once again.

A religious teacher is most happily placed when he can foresee the coming of such stability and is in a position to work towards it. This is why far-sighted and progressive men in the Anglican and Free Churches of this country have to-day a joyous confidence. For two or three generations at least we need have no fear of religious stagnation. Well-ordered thought will evolve out of the present clash of argument. Vigorous controversy is itself a proof of widespread interest in the life of the Spirit. When sound theology is established in a great group of Christian communions, the reunion of which we dream will be effectively achieved even though we may not get formal unity. But what will subsequently happen when the children of to-day are old men we cannot prophesy. Through cycles of change—progress, decay and reformation—our people like others will move. So far as we can see, human civilisation is as yet in its infancy. Unnumbered thousands of years lie ahead during which man will pursue his quest for knowledge of God and seek to establish the Kingdom of God upon earth. We dream and wonder. . . . Some new era of geological time may bring a new species of animal to dominate the earth. . . . From such surmises we come back to the immediate present to realise the force of the saying: "The Kingdom of God is within you." These were the words of a Teacher Who pointed the way to that Eternal life which for each one of us is the thing that finally matters, for it transcends time and is with God.

XXVI

SOME REFLECTIONS ON EUGENICS AND RELIGION [1]

EUGENICS is the science of human betterment. Its object is to discover how we may breed better human beings. The eugenist seeks to improve human racial stocks in the belief that he can thereby quicken the process of civilisation. He fixes attention primarily on the individual and not on his surroundings. He is concerned with nature rather than nurture, with the innate qualities which the individual inherits rather than with the environment in which those qualities have an opportunity of growth and expression. Eugenics and Sociology are thus complementary to one another. The extravagant eugenist says that the swine makes the stye. The extravagant sociologist says that the stye makes the swine. Neither statement expresses the full truth, and even expert biologists differ widely as to the extent to which the balance of truth inclines one way or the other.

It cannot be disputed that the innate good qualities which a man inherits fail to develop in bad surroundings. Ignorance, dirt, vicious example, and abject poverty degrade personality. They prevent the growth of that which is best in a child and stimulate its baser instincts. So strong in the life of a child are the influences of what the psychologists call

[1] The Galton Lecture delivered before the Eugenics Education Society on Tuesday, February 16th, 1926.

association and *suggestion* that many think that environment is of more importance than heredity. It must be admitted that our knowledge as to what constitutes "heredity" lacks precision. We are ignorant as to how far a child receives from its parents at conception a set of physical and psychical fundamentals which no environment will change. But statistical inquiries in general confirm the common saying, "like begets like." We have, moreover, to remember that civilisation is a racial product. The forces of association and suggestion which act on any individual within it, no less than most of his physical surroundings, are the creation of the race. If the racial stock be good, such forces and physical conditions will gradually become more beneficial. If the stock be poor, both its physical environment and mental atmosphere will gradually degenerate. The ultimate creative power of a civilisation resides in the innate racial qualities of the people which make it, whatever be the process by which those qualities were initially produced.

No nation is homogeneous. Probably all races result from a blend of peoples of different types. A so-called pure race is one which has lived so long free from alien intrusion that a uniform type has been gradually evolved. In such a race the fundamentals due to heredity have been thoroughly mixed. Among its members there is therefore a naturally strong social cohesion. Individuals think, feel, and act in much the same way. In particular there will be uniformity of religious outlook. For a pure race what Disraeli called "the religion of all sensible men" is a definite entity.

When a nation is mixed and, in particular, when

one race imposes itself upon another there can be no such unity. At first the apparent civilisation will be that of the dominant race. Culture will be created by the ruling aristocracy; and the populace will accept organisation by which it benefits though this be based on principles and ideas with which it has little sympathy or understanding. This situation probably existed when Greek civilisation reached its zenith. Ultimately the ruling stocks died out, dissipated by war or luxury. Such of their descendants as survived were the offspring of mixed marriages, racially impure. Now when two races are thus mixed the individual seems to lack stability of organisation. The characteristics derived from his parents are associated rather than blended. Probably it is only after a fairly large number of generations that a new type of harmony is created. In the early generations the physical characters of one or other of the parental types may be dominant; but the recessive strain cannot be ignored, and I believe that in the fundamentals of the mind there is disharmony. The distrust of half-castes is not the outcome of mere prejudice. They are often unstable in character. In the popular phrase, "you never know what they will do next." It is impossible to foretell which side of their mental inheritance will be uppermost on any particular occasion.

After a sufficient number of generations a mixed race evolves a unity, a unity in diversity, of its own. Which of the two strands which go to make it is dominant? The answer seems to be that which is indigenous to the soil. Black and white in England mate and white survives. Black and white in Jamaica mate and black survives. There seems little

doubt that in ancient Greece the original population gradually asserted itself. Most certainly the great intellectual achievements of the Golden Age were gradually ignored; they were submerged by primitive folk-beliefs thrust up from the populace. Moreover, where the physical characters of one or of two mixed races prove the stronger, the mental qualities of that race are usually dominant, and *vice versa*. The half-caste in Jamaica not only becomes darker in successive generations, but he also becomes more negroid in his habit of mind. Language, as we know, is no criterion of racial origin. But ideas, and especially religious ideas, are a very good criterion as to which strain in a mixed race has proved the stronger. The religious practices and beliefs of the black Republic of Hayti are not, according to good observers, vastly different from those of the African jungle.

I am suggesting that the fundamentals of the mind persist, from generation to generation, roughly to the same extent as distinctive physical characters of the body. Mental tendencies are, I believe, much more permanent than is commonly supposed. A higher culture or a new religion may be given to a race, but, if left to itself, its old culture and its old religion will emerge but slightly camouflaged. Nominally the Iberian stock in Southern Italy has been Christian for some fifteen centuries. Christianity is a form of ethical theism; but the actual faith of the Southern Italian is magical polytheism, camouflaged as sacramentalism and the prayers of the saints. It was essentially the worship which prevailed among the Mediterranean Iberians before the Christian era. Invaders may sweep over the land: a new religion may

be nominally established. But the old stock with the old faith effectively triumphs.

Such conclusions are disconcerting to enthusiasts; but this is mainly because enthusiasts are short-term optimists. Can we rightly expect any great fundamental change in a well-established stock in a couple of thousand years? When we consider that the human race has been evolving for something like a million years must we not expect that progress will be slow, especially if conditions do not make for the survival of the fittest?

And here I come to the heart of my subject. How can we secure the survival of the fittest, and therefore the survival and development of the fittest types of religious aspiration and understanding?

I wish that the experts could reach agreement as to how variations arise in what is apparently a fairly homogeneous stock. All admit that there is a tendency to fluctuation observable in successive generations. Is this tendency inherent in the life-process? Is it affected by use and disuse, so that acquired characteristics are ultimately inherited? Do small variations and large mutations alike result from combinations of parental characteristics, latent or patent? Is the growth of the cell from which a new life takes its beginning merely dependent on the initial nature of the genes in the chromosomes?[1] It seems to me that we must postulate some creative activity in the life-process, a constant "more or less" flux. If we dislike any form of vitalism we may ascribe this to the activity of mind, of that unknown reality which in varying degrees is present in all living things. This carries us little

[1] The best answers to this series of questions, so far as answers are at present possible, seem to me to be given by T. H. Morgan, *The Theory of the Gene* (Yale University Press, 1926).

further because we do not know what mind is, nor how it has seized upon certain chemical compounds, of which carbon is the most important element. What I would insist upon is that a survey of the whole evolutionary process negatives the idea of a mere unpacking or reassortment of what was already present in primal organisms. New things have been created, new degrees of reality have emerged, in earth's life-history. We cannot, of course, separate the process by which life has become progressively more complex from the environment in which change has occurred. The environment may "cause" or direct the change. Most certainly the environment destroys individuals not adapted for survival within it.

We have, however, to recognise that the changes which occur owing, as I believe, to creative activity within the life-process are not always what we should consider valuable. If I may use the language of religion, God has not made man, and is not perfecting human civilisation, by causing offspring to be always slightly better or slightly more highly organised than were the parents. He allows a type of change which to our value-judgments can be either good or bad. Within certain limits degeneration is as likely as progress. And this is true whether the changes which we observe are large or small, inheritable or not. God's judgment on this random process of change is expressed by the subsequent action of the environment in which it occurs. By what is termed "the ruthlessness of Nature" He weeds out the less valuable products of His plan.

The thought that God acts in this way is often disliked and ignored by those who wish to retain a belief in ethical Theism. They recoil from the idea that He

permits degeneration as well as progress to take place. Their distress would be less acute, if they remembered that environment is equally His creation. However perplexed we may be by the whole scheme, the fact remains that it has led to the successive emergence of more highly organised animal types culminating in man. And moreover in man there has been, owing to this process, a growth of moral excellence and spiritual understanding. By spiritual understanding I mean man's knowledge that the obligations of truth and goodness are imposed upon him from without by the very nature of things ; that we ought to be loyal to absolute standards outside ourselves ; that there are in the universe absolute values which transcend space and will outlast time. Man, by acquiring such understanding, has begun to enter the Kingdom of the good, the beautiful and the true. The tree is known by its fruits, and the character of the Creator must be judged by the final outcome of His plan. The existence of evil has always seemed to challenge the goodness of God : our knowledge of the evolutionary process does not really increase perplexity.

By whatever process new characteristics arise in man and in the lower forms of life, it is certain that some are inheritable. It is certain, moreover, that this is true alike of physical and mental characteristics. The structure of the mind is engendered with the body. Both are profoundly affected by the circumstances of life ; yet some fundamentals are given at the start. And by the mind we mean the whole personality of a man. No dichotomy of human personality, such as St. Paul took from the philosophy of his time, is satisfactory. When we speak of the immortality of the soul we mean the survival of human personality, or of such

a development of that personality as gives it complete survival-value. I have said that the relation of mind to body is an unsolved enigma. We can only accept the fact that just as healthy, well-formed parents normally have healthy, well-formed children, so able parents generally have able children. Moreover, there is no doubt that regard for religion and the ethical ideals with which it is associated is inherited. There are stocks in which spiritual aspiration shows itself, in various manifestations, from generation to generation. Few religious leaders of fame and power lack ancestors, possibly in quite humble circumstances, who showed religious enthusiasm. Equally, of course, parents of poor mental quality and vicious tendencies, unresponsive to the elevating influences with which they may gain contact, have like children. Such stocks are a burden and a source of weakness to the community.

But why do good stocks produce degenerate offspring? We all know cases when the parents, each apparently healthy and sound in mind, with a well-balanced nervous organisation, have a child which is semi-imbecile. Is feeble-mindedness a dysgenic mutation, the "spontaneous" appearance of a new and bad variant? Is genius similarly a eugenic mutation? A possible answer is that each results from a chance combination of parental factors, a combination, moreover, which has some element of hereditary permanence.[1] Statistical biology makes it certain that the man of genius, if he leaves descendants, usually hands on to some among them more than usual ability. And

[1] I incline to think, however, that it will ultimately be found that certain forms of feeble-mindedness, at any rate, are initially due to dysgenic mutations in one or more genes and that such are inherited.

feeble-mindedness, once established, will crop out generation after generation.

We can leave genius to take care of itself, though we have to admit that it is curiously and distressingly unfertile. This lack of fertility manifests itself in men of religious genius, in a John Wesley no less than in an Isaac Newton. But the feeble-minded are disastrously prolific, and their fecundity must be a grave concern to every religious man and woman. The problem constantly confronts religious teachers. A bishop is asked: What can be done as regards the confirmation of mentally-defective adolescents? They have no capacity of response to religious teaching; and in the poorer quarters of our great cities the clergy are constantly met by border-line cases, children and adults, in whom it is impossible to arouse any spiritual aspiration. I do not ask you to be concerned with their non-acceptance of some particular form of religious faith. The trouble is that these people are at such a low mental level that they have no instinct for spiritual values.

What is to be done with them? The harsh conditions of our civilisation until a century ago weeded them out. There was a ruthlessness against which our humane instincts revolt. To-day social changes, consequent on the more Christian organisation of the State, enable them to survive.[1]

Very strong arguments can be brought forward for the sterilisation of mental defectives. Such were advanced in a recent letter to *The Times* (January 18th, 1926), signed by a number of eminent medical men. The signatories urged that sentiment and ignorance should not be allowed to prevent legislation. Though

[1] At the present time in England they number about 4 per 1,000 of the population.

they did not explicitly say so, they must be well aware that Christian religious sentiment instinctively sets itself against their proposals. The opposition may not be permanent; but its grounds are worth stating. Christianity seeks to create the Kingdom of God, the community of the elect. It tries to make what we may call a spiritually-eugenic society. It recognises that by no means all human beings are fit for this society. "Many are called, but few are chosen," is a saying of its Founder, the truth of which continuous experience has verified. But, also, Christianity affirms the rights and value of the individual simply as a human being. And, together with this affirmation, the belief has been strong that all men are potentially sons of God, so made that, if they will, they can enter the Kingdom. "No man is so vile, so degraded," says the Protestant evangelist, "that we can pronounce *a priori* that his conversion is hopeless." "Through the sacraments there is salvation for all," says the Catholic. Yet an evangelical movement always ends by creating a spiritual aristocracy. And though group-suggestion through sacramental worship is powerful, suggestion is always a process of give and take. The low-grade worshipper gives base metal for gold. Thus insensibly the moral level of the group-consciousness becomes lowered. And in the end non-ethical sacramentalism becomes a drag on spiritual progress.

The facts are well known: yet belief in the possibility of the salvation of all men, of bringing all into the Kingdom, persists. Such belief in the inherent value of the individual has great ethical importance. It is doubtful whether you will do unto others as you would that they should do unto you, if you think that they are not fundamentally of potentially equal value with

yourself. The great bond of social unity is that we regard our fellow-citizens as sharing with ourselves the full heritage of humanity.

Now eugenists have made it clear that mental defectives not only lack some of the most valuable qualities of our human heritage, but also that they often transmit such lack to their offspring. Yet a doubt remains as to whether there is no latent power of recovery. The question is asked : Among the children of parents both mentally defective, is it not possible that normal human beings, or even genius, may be found ? Until a negative answer can be given to this question, Christian sentiment will be slow in giving approval to sterilisation proposals. The Christian community, though very conservative, is by no means devoid of common-sense. If you could demonstrate that the feeble-minded were not only in themselves a social burden, but also that there was nothing latent in them of value to the race, you would rapidly win Christian sympathy and support. I doubt if you will soon be able to do this. But, if you show, as it can be shown, that the feeble-minded normally have so many defective descendants that their fecundity is a barrier to the extension of spiritual perception, you will gradually get Christians to approve action by which such fecundity is checked.

By imperfect analogies we might conclude that sound men could be bred, under suitable conditions, from the worst feeble-minded stocks. Professor MacBride[1] argues, from Tornier's work on the production of gold-fish, that mutations to be observed in domestic animals and plants result from

[1] See, for example, his article in *Evolution in the Light of Modern Knowledge* (Blackie & Son, 1925), p. 230.

"germ-weakening" under artificial conditions. He consequently rejects the idea that such mutations can play a decisive part in the process of evolution. But does not the same line of argument suggest that mental deficiency may be due to germ-weakening under artificial conditions? I understand that if gold-fish were allowed to breed freely under natural conditions, they would revert to the small grey carp from which they were derived. Domestic animals, when they run wild, tend to revert to natural types. Our sense of values is determined by human fancy and human appetite; and we therefore term such reversion a degeneration to the original type. But from the point of view of Nature the reversion is surely a reversal of the artificial disorder which man has produced. Has man not produced conditions which make for similar disorder in his own race? The industrial revolution has within half a dozen generations removed the greater part of our people from the healthy influence of unspoiled nature. Slum life, drugs, artificial pleasures and excitements *may* surely produce germ-weakening. Is it not possible that the simple life, to use a convenient phrase, would be sufficient to breed, even from the acutely feeble-minded, a mentally healthy stock? I put the question diffidently in the search for information.[1]

It is well known to all social workers that the part of our population which lacks ability, initiative, self-reliance, and energy tends to remain in the central areas of our great cities. The clergy who work in these areas find that any individuals who show exceptional enterprise soon move away. There is thus an automatic segregation of the unfit. But these unfit shew

[1] As I have indicated, I do not expect that a positive answer will be the outcome of successful research.

every possible degree of what I venture to call germ-weakening. Mental deficiency is not a definite abnormality to be sharply distinguished from the normal. It is the extreme illustration of a graduated process. The average level of mental life of a slum area in which segregation has taken place is exceptional, much lower than that of the community as a whole. Religious work in such an area is practically hopeless. Even among the children the response is slight: among adults it is negligible. The few who "have the religious sense" are those who sooner or later leave the area. Such facts, which are commonplaces to anyone engaged in religious administration, are worthy of the close attention of eugenists. I suggest to you that absence of any kind of religious interest is evidence of mental abnormality. Man is a religious animal, though he is by no means always naturally Christian either in temper or thought. The saying "the nearer the soil, the nearer to God" is, of course, an exaggeration. But those who are uprooted from the soil are a difficult religious problem. Some, as I have said, have no apparent capacity for religious response. Others, in more prosperous ranks of society, often turn to "cranky" types of belief, in which the student of comparative religion can recognise a close affinity to low-grade expressions of the religious sense which have previously arisen in human evolution. Those of us who are concerned to preserve the highest type of religion, which is a harmony in which the elation of the mystic is fused with reason and ethical principle, are greatly troubled by the present religious chaos. It is almost a commonplace that the religious fancies that run riot to-day bear a singular likeness to those which were widespread in classical civilisation during the second century of

our era. Have they been produced by similar social conditions? Are they the result of urban life? Is it true that the development of the constituents of the chromosomes in the germ-cells is injuriously affected by the way in which infants are reared in crowded areas, by life under artificial light, by alcohol, by conditions which militate against a natural and healthy sexual life? The problem is immensely important. Religious decay is not merely a sign of social ill-health: its consequence is likely to be increased social degeneration. That such decay exists is undoubted. I receive an amazing number of letters, of manuscripts and printed disquisitions, which testify to its prevalence. And some experience of controversy has made me realise how weak is the regard for truth of certain types of religious zealots. The power of suggestion, emotional upset due to the war, imperfect education—all may be contributory factors to the prevailing religious degeneration; and we do not forget that the foolish are always with us. It may be that the type of our population is changing; that the Nordic strain is less resistent than the Iberian to hostile influences in our present manner of life. But it is hardly likely that such a change should have been so rapid. If the standpoint popularised by Professor Jennings in his *Prometheus* should pass the test of further research, we should be tempted to conclude that the artificial conditions of modern urban life are injurious to the development of the genes which the individual receives from his parents. We should then deduce that a return to the simple life would be the best way of furthering religious progress. Most certainly observation of the Quakers confirms this conclusion. They are our spiritual aristocrats, and by the simplicity of their manner of life they stand apart from the great

mass of the community. I would add that the simple life need be neither barren nor falsely ascetic : marriage and children should normally have a place within it.

A group of representative citizens, including some leading surgeons, has recently urged the value of the simple life as a protection against ill-health. In my belief that the physical and psychical characteristics of humanity are in much the same fashion products of heredity and environment, I welcome their plea. It seems to me that such knowledge as we have indicates that a more natural way of living would create mental no less than physical health, and in particular that it would be of direct religious value.

Darwin's philosophy has been well summarised by Professor D'Arcy Thompson[1] in the words :

> "Fit and unfit arise alike, but what is fit to survive does survive and what is unfit perishes."

Whatever be the detailed mechanism of evolution, the broad principle thus enunciated admits of no dispute. It has destroyed the old narrow teleology. It has made us see that we must assign as much importance to the environment which God has created as to the capacity for variation which He has given to living organisms. But, if we take this wider standpoint, there is nothing in this philosophy inconsistent with the Christian outlook. God's progressive action, His creative activity leading to spiritual understanding in man, remains. God, by allowing fit and unfit to arise alike and by using environment to destroy the unfit, has produced in humanity spiritual understanding. But He has also made man to a small yet increasing degree master of his own fate. We can do something, much

[1] See his essay on *Natural Science* in *The Legacy of Greece*, edited by R. W. Livingstone (Clarendon Press, 1921), p. 157.

more than we have yet done, to make human environment favourable to the survival of those qualities in humanity which we rightly value and of human beings in whom those qualities occur. But we must not create an environment in which the feeble-minded, the criminal, and the insane can multiply rapidly. Though such persons may have some descendants of social value, it is statistically demonstrable that the average of their descendants will be below the normal. When they breed freely, they are an impediment to the creation of what the Christian terms the Kingdom of God on earth. The humane man, as a consequence of his religious instinct, desires a good environment for all who may be born into the world. He is learning that he cannot get his desires unless his social organisation is such that degenerates leave no offspring. When religious people realise that, in thus preventing the survival of the socially unfit, they are working in accordance with the plan by which God has brought humanity so far on its road, their objections to repressive action will vanish.

XXVII

GOD [1]

"Our Father, which art in Heaven."—LUKE xi. 3.

FROM time to time different theological problems tend to come to the front. A particular question may almost monopolise for a period the attention of thoughtful religious men. The endeavour to balance predestination and free-will engaged the earnest attention of the sixteenth century and remains petrified in our Thirty-nine Articles. At the beginning of the eighteenth century the Deistic controversy overshadowed theological speculation in England. A century later geological discoveries caused the problem of Creation to be in the ascendant. Discussion of it yielded to animated controversy with regard to miracles. We have lately passed through a period when the doctrine of the Incarnation was the object of close study and popular debate. And now, as it seems to me, there is a new shake of the kaleidoscope; and God's nature and mode of action constitute a problem to which men are turning with especial eagerness.

It may be said with truth that all these matters are aspects of one fundamental inquiry. But the way in which we approach the one issue and the importance we give to subsidiary elements within it vary so

[1] A Sermon preached before the University of Cambridge on Sunday, May 16th, 1926.

markedly that each successive wave of attention has a character and significance of its own.

There was never any doubt that, if Darwinian evolution established itself in educated opinion, the problem of God's nature would become acute. As to the fact of evolution there is no doubt; and, if Darwin's explanation be not exhaustive, it embodies important truths. The ruthlessness of "natural selection" cannot be disputed. The fittest have survived in a process of struggle wherein, to our thinking, profuse waste and continuous carnage abound. Out of the witches' cauldron man has emerged, with instincts fashioned in it of which in his better moments he is ashamed. Can God, the Creator of this process, be good? The question ceased to be academic when the War forced us back to the jungle. The War with its waste and terror, its mental and moral confusion, brought civilised man up against his origin. It emphasised the unreason that we seem to find in the Universe. It led many to doubt that a God of power and love rules the world.

So long as the scientific materialism of the last half of the nineteenth century held its ground, man was an evolutionary product whose religion was an illusion and whose moral sense was an enigma. We only needed to extend the range of our knowledge of natural law and every action of the individual could be predicted by solving the appropriate system of differential equations. The reign of such mechanistic beliefs has ended. Men have begun to doubt whether the laws of physics are adequate, or can be made adequate, even in the realm of inorganic nature. An unexpected streak of spontaneity has appeared in the atom itself. The hope of including human volition in an iron net-

work of law has faded. The emergent, the new thing, appears in all our descriptions of the evolutionary process.

Yet, baffled though we may be by the occurrence of the unexpected and unpredictable, the progressive development of scientific thought emphasises the unity of plan and structure of the Universe. The cosmos hangs together. The bundles of regular sequences in it which we have discovered indicate the existence of true cause, of purpose expressed in a single ground-plan. It seems to me that the existence of God, to whose Intelligent Will the whole is due, has become an increasingly reasonable belief. But the theoretical existence of a God Who fashions and guides the machine of which we are products is of little significance for humanity. We inquire whether He is the loving Father of Christ's Gospel; and, if He be so, how He reveals Himself to men.

Personally I do not feel drawn to the suggestion, with which some serious thinkers toy, that the Universe is, to our modes of thought, fundamentally irrational. That we are so made that we can never hope to discover the scheme of things because the mind of man and the mind of God are in fundamental disharmony seems to me fantastic. That our minds are finite and limited in their power we admit. But it is one of my postulates of faith that that which is rational to the Supreme Mind Who created us must also be rational to us. Abandon this faith and the only value of science is its practical utility. Abandon this faith and you open flood-gates through which every kind of superstition can pour to overwhelm the reasonable spiritual understanding which humanity has acquired slowly and preserves with difficulty. So-called anti-

intellectualism is crass scepticism, the natural ally of superstition. That it should be associated with other forms of reaction is natural. It has developed concurrently with the growth of Fascism in Italy. I trust that this country may be preserved from both evils.

Physical science may at the moment have reached an *impasse*.[1] Biological science certainly presents us with problems to which we can see no solution. It may be that certain ultimates, associated with the creative activity of God immanent in the Universe, will always be hidden from us. But the remarkable extent to which our descriptive constructions are verified by experiment, over wide ranges of natural phenomena, seems to me satisfactory evidence that there is a harmony between our thought and the Divine plan of the Universe. We may allow that we have not yet built a satisfactory thought-scheme to include all the results of sense-observation. We may hold that, however long humanity may be permitted to interrogate Nature, there will remain something which eludes its mental grasp. But there seems to me no adequate reason for believing that our inability results, not from the limitations of our minds, but from some essential defect in our mental processes. To the superstitious fanatic who does not wish to think it may be comfortable to believe that God has so made us that we cannot think straight; but I doubt whether this belief will permanently commend itself to mankind.

Man is a product of Nature—an emergent in the Divine scheme. Civilised man is the highest emergent

[1] The allusion is to the gulf which separates quantum phenomena from the Newtonian concepts which Einstein has incorporated in the general theory of relativity.

of which we have knowledge. I take it then that in him we see, at the highest level we can reach, the end to which the unity behind Nature is tending. If we denote this unity behind Nature by God, we find God's purpose most fully displayed in the evolution of civilised man. The qualities which in our civilisation we are perforce developing, and finding increasingly valuable, are those which God has desired to bring into existence. They are the clearest indications we can get of His nature. From one point of view the value of social righteousness is an empirical discovery of civilised man. But, on the other side, God has led man to the discovery by fashioning the environment in which man is placed. Social righteousness is thus an aspect of one of the supreme values of the Universe. Such righteousness cannot be made perfect unless throughout humanity the standards of ideal family life prevail. These standards must then be regarded as those of God Himself. He can best be thought of as the ideal Father. We are led to the conclusion that God is Love.

No sooner do we reach this standpoint than the problem of evil challenges it. Why should Nature's ruthlessness and fierce appetite have been used to create man? Why should man himself find God's values by struggling against the passions bred in him by his ancestral past? It may be that thus good comes out of evil. But why is evil an essential part in the plan of the God Who is Love? No answer can be given; but the alternatives are less satisfactory than the conclusion we have reached. We cannot postulate two Gods, for the cosmic process is plainly a unity. We cannot believe that God is morally inert, both good and evil; for the end of His plan, as we can see it,

is the emergence of ethical values. We cannot believe that God is slowly discovering His own true nature, for that is to place God in time, to affirm that the unity behind phenomena is changeable. The problem of evil is an *impasse*, the most impenetrable of all the barriers which man tries to pierce by speculative inquiry.

But the moral constraints of God, which all our social difficulties combine to emphasise, make our duty clear. We must seek goodness through truth, and try to make both increase the beauty of human life. God acts upon us through the forces to which we find ourselves subject. There are, on the one hand, the blind forces of Nature which we try to turn to our own use. The effort demands that we should seek knowledge, find truth, discover the mechanism of the inorganic world. But there are also the forces immanent in human relations. Desire for the City of God is innate. It is possible to scoff at some of its manifestations as a mere wish for material well-being—but there is behind economic struggles a perception that harsh poverty in industrial areas makes spiritual richness impossible. Beauty of living is impossible without a certain spaciousness; and goodness is harmed, vice is created, by conditions which penury imposes. God, in fact, teaches us by our needs. The guidance of His Spirit is implicit in the progress of civilisation. He inspires the prophets as they realise more clearly than their contemporaries the conditions under which progress can be maintained and developed. God is not an absentee monarch, nor is His creative activity limited to significant stages of the evolutionary process. He did not merely intervene to create life, or perception, or rational self-consciousness, or moral

insight. He continuously works through the machine He has devised. Whether His action be direct as well as indirect is a question to which I find it difficult to attach a clear meaning. When a Hebrew prophet began his message with the words "Thus saith the Lord" did not all his environment unite to produce spiritual perception? I do not believe that we can make a dualism of natural and supernatural. The spiritual is an emergent of the natural, rooted in the rational consciousness without which it could not exist.

We cannot compel God's aid, or gain wisdom from Him, in any other way than by making ourselves receptive to His influence. Prayer is precisely this setting of ourselves to understand: the attempt to harmonise our deepest experience and to co-ordinate our flashes of insight with the facts of life. That such prayer is answered is the conviction of most of us or we should not continue to pray: it is a fact affirmed with impressive certainty by the spiritual leaders of mankind. Some types of crude petition of the savage or the child receive no answer. But the prayers by which we seek to influence for good the actions of our fellow-men are often unexpectedly successful. It is probable that we thus use a power of suggestion that is then stronger than at other times; and stronger because the enthusiasm generated by the desire for righteousness is peculiarly infectious. If this be so we may surely say that God thus helps those who seek to do His will. In spiritual things the popular maxim that God helps those who help themselves expresses an important truth.

The way in which God's grace, or spiritual aid, is given to men needs to be studied at the present time with especial attention. Differences of opinion, largely

based on unexamined prejudices, lie at the root of most of our ecclesiastical and, I would add, of some of our social controversies.

There is the general position that all who try to follow Christ receive His aid: that the Holy Spirit gives His blessing to those who seek it. Within the English Church this position has always been of influence in the evangelical tradition. It was maintained by the Cambridge Platonists of the seventeenth century. It is fundamental in English modernism. Men who uncompromisingly accept it regard differences of Church organisation or tradition as matters of sentiment or convenience. They will not "unchurch" other Christian communions, for in them plainly the fruits of the Spirit are manifested. This standpoint was affirmed, to the dislike of some among us and the surprise of more, by the Anglican representatives in the recent Joint Conference on Reunion. "Ministries," they said, "which imply a sincere intention to preach Christ's Word and administer the Sacraments as Christ has ordained, and to which authority to do so has been solemnly given by the Churches concerned, are real ministries of Christ's Word and Sacraments in the Universal Church."

The English High Churchman, of the traditional type, might formally acquiesce in this statement; but he would gloss it by a doctrine of "covenanted mercies." He would maintain that special grace is given to the ministry of those episcopally ordained and urge that their more regular Sacraments are more efficacious. I cannot myself see that such a theory can be established by any test that we can apply. The theory is not maintained in the Articles of Religion of the English Church, though a suggestion of it

survives in the Ordination of Priests in the words: "Receive the Holy Ghost for the office and work of a Priest in the Church of God now committed unto thee by the imposition of our hands." Of course any argument from these words as to a special gift of grace may be countered by the promise that our heavenly Father will give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him (Luke xi. 13). The Anglican High Church doctrine, however, has a long tradition behind it; and, in view of the limitations of our knowledge as to the way in which God influences men, may be held as a pious opinion, not intolerably offensive to reason.

But for the belief that God will endow, not merely men, but inanimate matter with special ministerial grace, which thereafter inheres in it, nothing can be said. It is a superstition, a relic of religious barbarism. All practices based upon it, or upon ingenious variants of it, were swept away by our Church at the Reformation; and the attempt now being made by certain Anglo-Catholic groups to bring them back is a sorry outcome of the cult of mediævalism which we owe to the Romantic Revival. I cannot, by blessing oil, cause God to give to it therapeutic or spiritual properties. I cannot turn water into Holy Water, in itself of value for the sanctification of the faithful. No one in the Eucharist can perform the miracle of transubstantiation. I will go further afield and affirm that his god does not dwell in the Hindu idol, however impressive be the satisfaction that the belief gives to the worshipper. We can apply scientific tests[1] to inanimate matter and demonstrate that the spiritual

[1] These tests, of course, would be psychological, not physical or chemical. We must test "holy matter" by the reaction of a human being and not by a galvanometer or chemical reagent.

properties supposed to be inherent in it have no existence apart from a knowledge of the rites and ceremonies to which it has been subjected.

It is unfortunately true that a natural tendency to magical sacramentalism still exists in our population. A lay-reader complained to me that he could not baptise, save in cases of emergency, and that consequently the children were sometimes baptised by Nonconformist laymen. I asked whether such baptism was deemed valid. He assured me that it was; and added, as a proof, that the water used was preserved under cover in a jam-jar that it might be applied to the child in case of illness. Such superstition can be exploited; but it ought to be expelled by teaching which gives a truer insight into the activity of God.

The Christian Church must maintain the position that faith must be rooted in truth. God works through the rational consciousness of man. The sacraments of life are not two, or seven, or seventy-times seven; and they are ways in which we perceive God's Will and gain by our understanding strength to serve Him.

I have been sorely troubled by some arguments privately advanced in defence of cults based on Eucharistic theories indistinguishable from Transubstantiation. The psychological effect of these cults on the simple worshipper, it is urged, is good; and we are in a region beyond the reach of reason. Here, of course, we have the familiar combination of scepticism and superstition to which I have already made reference. If it establishes itself in our Church, we shall cease to command the sympathy of educated people in England.

I do not personally fear such an outcome. Extravagances of belief are produced by decay of faith. It is because the reasonableness of faith in God as the loving

Father of men has decayed that we get a revival of superstition. If, as I believe, such faith can be re-established by patient and reasoned argument, the Church of England will be able to give to the nation the spiritual inspiration which we shall sorely need in the troubled times that lie ahead. Belief in God's love can give us joy in God's service, if it be held with even a touch of Christ's splendid certainty. It can make us " ever trustful, ever hopeful, ever patient." You younger men and women who will witness the transformation of an England whose coal supplies are dwindling will need trust, hope and patience before your days are ended.

XXVIII

THE BICENTENARY OF NEWTON'S DEATH [1]

We meet to-day to commemorate by a religious service the bicentenary of the death of Sir Isaac Newton. It is quite characteristic of the attitude of the English people towards the national Church that a group of mathematicians and astronomers, laymen all, should have desired to have such a religious service as the conclusion of their celebrations. They know, as every educated man knows, that Newton's splendid achievements, enshrined in his *Principia*, finally overthrew certain beliefs which at the time of the Reformation were held by all, Catholics and Protestants alike. They know that the contest in which he won the decisive victory was but the first of a number—I mention geology, Darwin and Biblical criticism—in which scientific method has successfully challenged views associated with traditional theology. None the less, they expect the English Church to be liberal, to join unreservedly in praising the genius of a great Englishman and in thanking God for his life-work. Their expectations are not disappointed; for the English Church is as illogical and, at its best, as sensible as the average Englishman.

To foreigners we are always something of a puzzle. The Thirty-nine Articles of our Church, to which every

[1] A Sermon preached in Grantham Parish Church on Sunday, March 20th, 1927.

clergyman still subscribes, belong to the pre-Copernican period of knowledge. They were in substance drawn up only ten years after a printed copy of Copernicus' great treatise was put into his hands on his death-bed in 1543. Our Prayer Book was last revised in 1662, a few years before the ideas of the *Principia* first took shape in Newton's mind. The Church has thus apparently ignored the vast change in human thought which science has made since the Renaissance. Its theology seems to be associated with crude beliefs as to the history and structure of the universe which were held in antiquity. But, in fact, its theology has been continuously re-shaped by its leading divines, and the process has not yet ended. So Newton lies under a monument in Westminster Abbey and Darwin was buried near by in the same great church. "Doubtless in each case such honour was rendered by order of the Government," a foreigner would conjecture. No; English clergymen still have the power to say who shall be buried in Westminster Abbey.

It is then with no misgivings, with no hesitation, that to-day we meet to praise Newton in the parish church of the town where he went to school. Six miles away, near the pleasant park of Stoke Rochford, he was born on Christmas Day, 1642, a puny infant "so small that they might have put him into a quart mug." In this neighbourhood he lived for the first eighteen years of his life, an inventive, meditative boy obviously unsuited to farm the small manor which his father had owned. Whence came his genius? We cannot say. His father's family had been settled in this neighbourhood for about a century. His mother was the sister of a local vicar on whose advice he was

finally sent to Trinity College, Cambridge. There seems to have been no trace of mathematical ability in any of his forbears. But, so far as environment went, he was a son of the parsonage. His father died before his birth. His mother's second husband was a clergyman. The boy was thus brought up under clerical influences. Such influences must have done much to give him the puritan austerity, the combined piety, frugality, and generosity, and the interest in theology which he retained throughout his long life. It is a mistake to believe, in consequence of a well-known gibe of Voltaire, that Newton only turned to theology when his powers failed because of the strain of the *anni mirabili*, the marvellous years, in which the *Principia* was produced. His theological interests, like his piety, persisted throughout his life. We may regret that he did not confine his activity to a domain where his powers were supreme. We must admit that his theological writings were of little permanent value. Yet they show extraordinary width of reading and no little perspicuity. The publication of Newton's tract on the textual criticism of two New Testament passages was deplored by an English bishop as late as the middle of the nineteenth century. But Newton was correct in his judgment; and the draft revision of the Prayer Book now before the public omits the famous verse of the three heavenly witnesses (1 John v. 7) to which he took exception.

It is well known that Newton refused to take Holy Orders, and that he was only, by virtue of a special patent from the Crown, enabled to remain as a Fellow of his college while holding the Lucasian Professorship at Cambridge. There seems to be no reason to doubt that he was urged to take Orders in later life and that,

had he done so, he might have received substantial ecclesiastical preferment. To reward a man of science by making him a bishop or a dean seems incongruous to us to-day. But it must be remembered that the connection of the Church with education and learning was far closer then than now ; and the Mastership of the Mint, the reward which Newton actually received, was not especially suited to his gifts. Newton's probity and industry while he had care of the coinage have earned the praise of historians and economists ; but a lesser man might have done equally valuable work.

Why did Newton with his high character, sincere piety and interest in theology steadily resist ordination ? What were his religious views ? The question has at times been somewhat acrimoniously debated. But, as a fuller knowledge was gained of the papers preserved in manuscript after his death, it finally became clear that he could not bring himself to accept the Athanasian doctrine of the Trinity. He was an ethical theist with a profound veneration for Christ ; but he was not prepared to allow that the Nicene formula adequately expressed the inter-relation of the divine and the human in the Person of Christ. As to the miracles of the New Testament and in particular the Virgin Birth, he had no doubts. In that, as in his sympathy with Arianism, he was a child of his age. Of that age also were his views of the so-called Mosaic cosmogony of *Genesis*. In an interesting letter written in 1680, when his intellectual powers were at their zenith, he expressed the opinion that Moses " described realities in a language artificially adapted to the sense of the vulgar." Leibniz at the same time showed a far more modern understanding of the geological process.

When we pass to Newton's metaphysics, and in particular to his views as to space and time, we reach ideas which the theory of Relativity has shown to be of transcendent importance. Whence did Newton get the conceptions of absolute space and absolute time which underlie the laws of motion which he formulated? I think it is not to be doubted that they come from the group of divines honourably known as the Cambridge Platonists. The importance of these men in the development of English religious thought has become increasingly clear in our own day and more especially to English Modernists whose endeavour to reshape Christian theology merits the close attention which it receives. More[1] and Cudworth were both older contemporaries of Newton: each was living when the *Principia* was written; and More's spiritualised space corresponded closely to Newton's famous scholium. God, as Newton put it, "is not eternity and infinity, but eternal and infinite; He is not duration and space, but He continues and is present. He continues for ever and is present everywhere; and by continuing to be always and everywhere, He constitutes duration and space." In this passage Newton breaks up the space-time continuum; duration and space were separated. But the metaphysic becomes strengthened rather than weakened if, modifying Newton, we say that "by continuing to be always and everywhere God constitutes space-time." Space-time so conceived becomes the primal stuff of the physical universe through which and in which God's purpose of creation

[1] More was some twenty-eight years older than Newton and, like him, was educated at Grantham School. His chief metaphysical work was published in 1671 and bears the ponderous title: *Enchiridion metaphysicum sive de rebus incorporeis* . . .

is achieved. God thus constitutes the nexus out of which man has emerged.

It is my purpose to-day to set before you Newton's religious sympathies and thoughts, so I make no attempt to describe the great system of dynamical astronomy of which his laws of motion are the foundation. As it sprang from his brain it was marvellously complete and well-nigh perfect in expression. To make it he invented a new calculus which in his hands was so flexible that, to disarm criticism, he gave it geometrical form. A new era in mathematics began with his discoveries. Instead of slow and painful progress, "line upon line, here a little and there a little," Newton jumped forward; and, as the centuries pass, men will continue to marvel at his splendid genius. In our own day a great thinker has made an immortal name for himself. But it is a mistake to think, as some imagine, that Einstein has overthrown Newtonian dynamics: he has rather brought gravitation itself within a modification of his predecessor's scheme. Newton's fame is secure. But he, were he alive, would be the first to praise the achievements of those who carry on his torch of knowledge. Did he not, with genuine humility, liken himself to a boy playing on the seashore, now and then finding a smoother pebble or a prettier shell than ordinary, while the great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before him?

The mathematician, like the poet, is born, not made. The science of mathematics is for the few, endowed with special ability which the chances of life permit to be trained and developed. But the conclusions of the mathematician have an interest for multitudes who cannot understand his technique. Newton, in finally establishing the truth of Copernican astronomy,

made humanity enter upon speculative inquiries of the highest importance.

What is man's place in the universe? How is he related to the purpose immanent in the whole? Newton gave little indication that he realised how extensively his work bore upon such inquiries, though there is one interesting passage in his writings where he asks: "If all places to which we have access are filled with living creatures, why should all these immense spaces of the heavens above the clouds be incapable of inhabitants?" Reticent though such a sentence is, it was Newton who finally forced the educated world of men to recognise the meanness of man's domicile. The earth had been the centre of the universe: Newton revealed it as a humble satellite of the sun. It needed but recognition of the fact that our sun is but one of millions of stars, and man's outlook was transformed. Are there no other stars in the galactic universe which have satellites? We cannot believe it. Are those satellites devoid of life? It is incredible. Has life always taken the same evolutionary course as that which has led to the creation of man upon this earth? Has such evolution never progressed beyond the stage at which man now finds himself? We are practically forced to answer that other types of physical development are alike conceivable and possible and, further, that mental and spiritual attainment, far higher than that of man, is probably now existent elsewhere in the Universe. And, when we give such answers, what is man in the great scheme of things? Though Newton has been dead two centuries, it is only in our own day that his countrymen, in the mass, are asking the questions to which his discoveries inevitably led.

On the fine statue by Roubiliac which takes the place of honour in the ante-chapel of Trinity, there is inscribed the line :

"*Qui genus humanum ingenio superavit,*"

"who in genius surpassed the whole world." It is the tribute of Lucretius to Epicurus, and a greater than Epicurus merits the praise. Wordsworth saw that statue, an inspiration to many an undergraduate before and since his day, and wrote the lines :

"The marble index of a mind for ever
Voyaging through strange seas of Thought, alone."

But through stranger seas than Newton ventured has he set men voyaging alone. What is our destiny, as individuals and as a race? Made of dust and water, specks on a small globe, apparently of no special importance in the vast range of creation, we live for but a tick of the astronomer's clock. Light reaches us to-day which began its journey before humanity had appeared upon this earth. Are we then of any importance in God's sight? Have we, as individuals or as a race, any permanence? Are we, after all, such stuff as dreams are made of? I give the old answer : "the things which are seen are temporal, the things which are not seen are eternal." The body returns to dust and water, but the mind, which ranges through space and time with a freedom that partakes of the divine, shall not perish. The spirit of a man who strives for truth and seeks goodness belongs to the realm of the eternal. Here it is fashioned by labour, by self-discipline, by reverence and love. Elsewhere in its perfection it shall have a richer existence. Does it matter that we are little more than

point-instants in space-time? I think not, for eternal values are not measured by rods and clocks, nor are they to be found in the blind forces of nature. "Not by might nor by power but by my spirit, saith the Lord." And Newton with his simple piety would have accepted the Hebrew prophet's words. As the spirit of man is transformed by the spirit of the Lord, as righteousness and truth fit him to serve God and think His thoughts, he becomes a son of God and an inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven.

XXIX

RELIGION AND SCIENCE: THE PRESENT PHASE [1]

"Walk as children of light."—EPHESIANS v. 8.

THIS morning the boys of Westminster School come here for the first Sunday service since the vacation. Among them are many, newly come to the school, who, as the years go by, will gradually enter into its traditions and become proud of its association with this famous Abbey Church. I prophesy that among them there are not a few who will pass through periods when they distrust and dispute the religious message which this building exists to proclaim. Our age is one of social and moral confusion, of inventions and discoveries which have marvellously altered the machinery of civilisation, of intellectual progress and unrest. So great is the turmoil that few landmarks seem safe and the religious beliefs and traditions of our forefathers are sharply challenged.

What advice shall I give to boys born to live in such an era? Shall I say: "Cling to the old faith"? I say rather, "Seek truth. Rejoice that you live in one of the greatest eras of scientific progress in the history of humanity. Welcome new discoveries with an open mind. Reverence the great men who make them. But remember that behind all the new knowledge the fundamental issues of life will remain veiled.

[1] A Sermon preached in Westminster Abbey on Sunday, September 25th, 1927.

You cannot ignore these issues and fully live. You must approach them with faith, faith built upon reason. And I doubt if in the end your faith will be different from that of many who have preached or are commemorated within these walls." But do not, I urge, yield to those who pretend to offer you short cuts to faith. Distrust special pleading. Shun the man who approaches you with some semi-magical religious nostrum. Religion is too solemn and weighty a matter for such associations. Seek truth: be honest and reverent in mind: be loyal to the high aspirations that arise in you as part of your heritage. Then there will dwell in you the Spirit of Christ.

To-day I would apply such general principles to the controversy raised anew by the address of the President of the British Association[1] a few weeks ago. What should be our attitude to the biological doctrine of evolution? How should we who value religion, and especially the Christian tradition in our civilisation, approach the various questions which it opens? Shall we cloud clear issues with a haze of words? Shall we suggest doubts when in reality no doubts exist? Shall we falsify Christian history and use the falsification to commend Darwinism as though it were no novelty? Or shall we honestly welcome new knowledge and admit that some traditional dogmas of Christian belief must be changed?

I plead for the latter as both the most honourable and the wisest course. Let us take the facts. To-day there is, among competent men of science, unanimous agreement that man has been evolved from an ape-

[1] The allusion is to the Presidential Address of Sir Arthur Keith, at Leeds in 1927, *Darwin's Theory of Man's Descent as it Stands To-day*.

like stock. He arose, possibly a million years ago, from a tangle of apes which began to vary in different directions. In man, more significantly than elsewhere among the primates, variation occurred in the brain, and especially in those parts of the brain known as centres of association. Other apes developed in other ways. Chimpanzees, gorillas and orang-utans thus arose and are man's first cousins. Whatever be the machinery by which evolution in general, and that of man in particular, has been effected, the fact itself is no longer denied by any of those whose opinion is worthy of respect. Darwin's assertion that man has sprung from the apes has stood the test of more than half a century of critical examination : increasing knowledge and careful inquiry have but confirmed its truth.

As a result the stories of the creation of Adam and Eve, of their primal innocence and of their fall, have become for us folk-lore. But by the men who built up Catholic theology they were accepted as solid fact. Man's special creation was one of the primary assumptions of the Catholic system. In it the Fall explained the origin of sin ; and a horrible theory of the propagation of sin, reared on the basis of the Fall by Augustine, was accepted by official Catholic theologians. Darwin's triumph has destroyed the whole relevant theological scheme. Many of us rejoice, for we regard the assertion that any Church is infallible, as alike impudent and dangerous. When so much of Catholic theology has been dissolved, the Church which accepted it can hardly claim to be free from error. But naturally there are those who would rescue from the havoc wrought by Darwin and his followers something by which to justify pretensions to doctrinal infallibility.

They press new claims and theories. Some are toying with the idea of a pre-mundane fall—some calamity of disobedience in the heavens, prior to man's appearance on the earth, a tragic event which brought evil into the scheme of creation. That such an idea, for which there is not a jot of evidence, can be seriously put forward, shows how amazingly unscientific in temper some of our theologians continue to be. Others who shrink from such flights of fancy are suggesting that, while man is physiologically a descendant of the apes, his mind is due to a special Divine act of creation. Such a contention cannot be upheld. Mental capacity and power are directly associated with the development of certain regions of the brain. The mind and body of man can equally be made subjects of observation and experimental inquiry. Evidence for the gradual evolution of each is equally cogent. The human mind has been derived by evolution from the intelligence of lower animals just as the human body has been evolved from the body of some primitive vertebrate. Probably in all evolution there has been physical and mental discontinuity: in other words, advance has come by small jumps and not by continuous change. Moreover, evidence for the cause of such jumps is lacking: so the man of science speaks of emergence. New qualities of being, powers, functions, animal types emerge in the process of evolutionary change. How they are produced we do not know.

But what biological inquiry has definitely established is that much that is evil in man's passions and appetites is due to natural instincts inherited from his animal ancestry. In fact, man is not a being who has fallen from an ideal state of perfect innocence: he is an animal slowly gaining spiritual understanding

and with the gain rising far above his distant ancestors. Further, it is quite impossible to harmonise this conclusion of scientific inquiry with the traditional theology of any branch of the Christian Church. The English Churchman is proud to know that his communion has enshrined among its Articles of Belief a statement that no Church is infallible. Even General Councils err : the wisest theologians make mistakes. If, then, opinions widely and even universally held turn out to be wrong, let us declare the fact and we need not blush as we make our confession. The man of science admits his mistakes without trying to conceal his retraction behind elaborate and evasive formulæ : the Churchman does well to follow his good example. We ought both to seek truth and also to be so glad when we discover new truth that we feel no pain in rejecting old error.

When this happens some will cry out that the faith is in danger. Well, as I read history, the only times when it has not been " in danger " have been those of complete intellectual stagnation. While some see danger to faith others will plead that we must preserve Catholic truth. I reply that I know of no private brands of truth : the sole alternative to truth is falsehood. Others will loudly proclaim that new ideas are heresy : we may answer with the commonplace that the heresy of to-day is the orthodoxy of to-morrow.

Already Christians who are not obsessed by traditional theology realise that the doctrine of evolution leaves Christ's teaching unaffected. If there be (as I believe) a God behind Nature *He can show His creative activity through the process of emergent evolution just as definitely as by special creation.* That He has used evil in His plan is obvious, and it puzzles us to reconcile

this fact with His goodness and power. But there is no new problem herein. Christ knew that there was much evil in the world which God made—evil for which therefore God must be ultimately responsible. Christ did not offer the delusive explanation which many have thought that the Fall provided. But none the less He could affirm that God is the loving Father of us all. We may reject His belief as unfounded: but Darwinism does not make our reasons for rejection any stronger. Probably most men, as their experience of life widens, come to accept Christ's view. There is so much goodness in the world, such rich beauty, that we cannot believe that there is evil in the Creator Himself. But His ends, we are forced to conclude, are not our own. We normally seek happiness: it is not natural to us to scorn delights and live laborious days. God seems rather to be desirous of progress, alike in the individual and in the race. His ideal man is not the animal, well-fed and luxurious, but the eager seeker for righteousness and truth. There is, of course, nothing new in such a conclusion: it is as old as the doctrine of the Cross.

But I would reiterate that those of us who believe that God has been active throughout the process which men of science term evolution hold that observed facts force us to this conclusion. Take, for instance, the gradual emergence of mind. We cannot believe that mind is merely a by-product of physico-chemical actions. Life apparently can only exist on the semi-moribund matter which results from the degeneration or break-up of a star. It is absurd to imagine that such matter should of itself be able to produce either thought or beings who think. So we conclude that when life and mind emerged on the cooling earth they

were new factors : products of a creative activity continuous since the first primitive organisms arose, as it would seem, from colloidal substances. So vast has been the progress due to God's activity that we trace its connections with difficulty : and only the expert can bridge even the last gap between the low mental life of the ape and the moral self-consciousness of civilised man. But as the expert exhibits successive links of the evolutionary chain he shows the results of God's creation ; a process which still continues, the end of which no man can foresee, the purpose of which we can only understand by joining faith to reason.

Such a union of faith and reason is needed when we are asked whether the soul is immortal. The question forces us to consider whether man is an end in himself or but a transient link in a chain. The language in which it is asked has become archaic : we should now rather inquire whether personality survives bodily death. In regard to personality we admit with the man of science that it grows as the body develops. In the new-born infant it hardly exists : in the adult it has been shaped by environment. We are what we are by virtue of our parents and surroundings ; and the classical researches of Professor Karl Pearson show that the forces of heredity are far stronger than those of circumstance. Yet as all these forces come ultimately from God, it is He Who shapes us. Now, if in the personality thus made there is something of eternal value, may we not reasonably hold that it will have an eternal existence ; that God will preserve what is worth keeping ? Certainly a time will come when this earth will no longer support life ; and, if there be no life beyond the grave, a philosopher from another planet would then conclude

that in truth God had made all men for naught. In the belief that God's creation has a purpose we are compelled to postulate the immortality of the soul.

So I would conclude that on the whole the modern scientific view of the origin of man's body and mind agrees well with Christ's teaching. But it cannot be reconciled with certain statements of St. Paul, nor with a belief in the infallibility either of the Bible or the Church, nor with the acceptance of some of the main strands of traditional Catholic theology. Yet are these facts of any importance? Why do men desire so often to preserve old errors? Why are religious people and their leaders so frequently timid and obscurantist? Some, of course, hate the trouble of thought, and therefore welcome easy submission to authoritative statement. Others are afraid that if they begin to raise questions their faith will vanish and they will be left miserable. Others like magic a little disguised: a Book or a Church entirely free from error is to them a first-rate mascot. Naturally, the men of science to whom the quest of truth is one of life's greatest joys are contemptuous of such ignorance, magic and fear. We who profess to follow Christ ought to share their contempt. Our present cowardice in naming and commending reason is, said Hort,[1] of modern growth. An evil tendency which he deplored in the Victorian era has become worse since the war. Pseudo-religious propaganda is now more shameless. Superstition is more prevalent. Sceptical orthodoxy more commonly joins hands with ignorant fanaticism. And so true religion, the religion of the Spirit of Christ, is harmed. The reaction is intelligible

[1] Hort, *The Way, The Truth, The Life* (Macmillan, 1897), p. 176.

because war is demoralising. It breeds fear and contempt of truth and disregard of spiritual values.

Let us be thankful that amid so much decay science has preserved standards which organised religion has frequently failed to safeguard. In our thankfulness we can remember that men serve God when they bring enthusiasm and intellectual power to the service of science. In such service hard work and unswerving loyalty to truth are needed. Thus the great man of science usually proves worthy of respect for his moral qualities no less than for his intellectual eminence. Between him and those who seek spiritual realities through the guidance of the Spirit of Christ there should be no lack of cordial sympathy. Goodness and truth are natural allies. Knowledge grows most rapidly when righteousness preserves peace. Wisdom is God's gift, and through wisdom men are blessed. Art and science and religious understanding are all of the realm of the Spirit. Christ bade us seek that realm : it is the Kingdom of Heaven in which God's will is done and in which He reveals Himself. Our Master, we proclaim, is the light of the world. Let us walk then as children of light.

XXX

SACRAMENTAL TRUTH AND FALSEHOOD [1]

These dinner-hour services, at which men and women speak who are representative of almost all varieties of Christian opinion, make the Parish Church a sort of public forum for the City of Birmingham. Those who speak here naturally feel a greater freedom than if they were preaching at a regular Sunday service. Those who come to listen expect that the problems of religion and social life will be discussed with candour no less than with sincerity.

I welcome the fact that on such occasions as this we meet in an atmosphere of quiet seriousness. I am glad also that the inhibitions of conventional ecclesiasticism are absent. Smooth, unctuous platitudes may have a soothing effect but they do nothing either to free men from the tyranny of mistaken beliefs or to create Christian enthusiasm for righteousness and peace.

I rejoice that repeatedly men and women from this pulpit have advocated specific causes worthy of Christian support : that here at all events the necessity for greater social righteousness has not been quietly ignored. But I believe that this pulpit is not adequately used unless from it there comes sound religious

[1] An address at the Parish Church of Birmingham on Thursday, October 6th, 1927. (Printed from the original typescript without modification or addition.)

teaching, inquiries into the fundamental principles of our faith. The Parish Church of Birmingham ought to be a centre for religious teaching no less than a focus of social enthusiasm. There are some who will at once urge that religious teaching may easily be controversial. Of course it will be controversial if it deals, as it ought, with questions on which erroneous opinions are held. Only through patient argument can we reach truth and spread truth ; and those who find that such argument cuts at the roots of beliefs which they hold dear will naturally desire to preserve the atmosphere of silence in which their errors can be quietly propagated.

To-day then I propose to be controversial. I intend to discuss sacramental truth and falsehood. I make no apology for my action, because the English Church will break in pieces unless unity as to sacramental doctrine can be reached. Moreover, unless such unity is based on truth the Church will end by purveying non-moral semi-magical beliefs which are a travesty of Christianity.

The idea of a sacrament is simple : it is the outward sign of God's presence. At its highest to know of God's presence is to feel the comfort of His care, to be assured of His loving power. Life is full of sacraments, great and small. Personally, I feel God near when the sunshine ripples over a cornfield or when the wind blows over a grass-green upland. Music brings Him to others : it stirs them so that they know the world to have unseen rhythms of beauty which are the expression of God's perfection. Others find in poetry the thrill that makes the world expand till it embraces God and causes Him to show Himself in common things. To a mother her children are true sacraments,

signs of God's creative power; and love has always been a sacrament, a symbol of that which is supreme in the eternal realm of spirit.

All of us have our sacraments—trivial little things sometimes that we do not speak of because others might mock or fail to understand. The Christian Churches have their special sacraments—all except the Quakers and the Salvation Army. These communions have broken away from the general tradition of Christian worship; and we must admit that, none the less, many of their members have shown the Spirit of Christ in their lives. Our own Church emphasises two sacraments, Baptism and the Holy Communion. Baptism is the outward sign of the grace which, as we believe, God gives to all who, as members of the Church, seek to be loyal servants of Christ. The Holy Communion is the service by which we reproduce, for memory and faith, the tragic supper which preceded Christ's death, and it is the sign of unity in Christ through self-sacrifice for righteousness' sake, the symbol of the Divine help which a good man gives to others when he is absolutely loyal to goodness and truth. So conceived the two great Sacraments are valuable, worthy of their place in the Christian tradition. But it is fatally easy to pass from the idea that sacraments serve to reveal God to a belief that through them we can mechanically bring God to men or cause Him to locate Himself in some object or place. Such a belief belongs to the realm of primitive magic. The priest-magician from time immemorial has been supposed to possess the skill to persuade his god to show his presence or his power in some unusual fashion. Pretensions to such magical skill are, of course, baseless. Yet the power of appeal of primitive

religious fancies is strong within us; and there are always men ready to devise dexterous formulæ to justify superstitions of which we ought to be ashamed. Take idolatry. The belief that a bronze idol should be worshipped is to us contemptible. But to many an educated Hindu such worship makes an irresistible appeal. Moreover, he has his argument ready. The idol, he avers, is nothing until it has been blessed by the priest. Then the god deigns to dwell within it; he gives to the image the honour of his real presence. If you ask for a proof of this assertion an educated Hindu points to the ecstatic enthusiasm aroused among worshippers of the wretched idol: such psychological reality, he contends, is sufficient proof.

There are among ourselves to-day men and women whose sacramental beliefs are not far from those of the cultured Hindu idolater. They pretend that a priest, using the right words and acts, can change a piece of bread so that within it there is the real presence of Christ. The idea is absurd and can be disproved by experiment. If there were a *physical* change in the bread, chemical analysis would enable us to detect it. All are agreed that this type of change does not take place. Yet if there be a *spiritual* change, it must surely be possible for man to recognise it by his spiritual perception. Now I assert—and who will gainsay me?—that there is no man living who, if a piece of bread were presented to him, could say whether or not it had been consecrated. Personally, I find it hard to attach any meaning to a spiritual change in dead matter; but if it exists there must surely be some living person who can perceive its existence. If there be no such person, belief in such a change is an idle superstition

Let me reiterate to make my point clear. If a physical change exists it can be physically perceived. If a spiritual change exists it can be spiritually perceived. We should not accept the word of a man who affirmed the existence of a physical change which no physicist could detect. Similarly, if a man affirms the existence of a spiritual change which no man can recognise by any form of spiritual perception, we deem his statement false. I am quite prepared to believe in transubstantiation when I can find a person who will come to the chapel of my house and tell me correctly whether a piece of bread which I present to him has undergone the change for which believers in transubstantiation contend.

It is wellnigh incredible that at the present day, when experimental psychology has become a science, there should be a recrudescence of the sort of sacramental magic which by that science can be demonstrably discredited. Let us keep to a simple, wholesome, and true understanding of what sacraments really are. Not seldom I have come away from a small gathering of Christians—it happened especially during the war—with the certainty that, when two or three are gathered together in Christ's name, He is in the midst of them. I should be the last to doubt that the Real Presence of Christ can be with men in the service of Holy Communion. But the whole service is the sacrament. Through the whole act of worship, with its solemn memories of our Saviour's passion, we get the grace of His Presence provided—and the proviso is important—provided we come in the right spirit. Christ gives Himself to His faithful servants: to those who worship Him in spirit and in truth. Such is true sacramental doctrine. But let the fancy

take root that a piece of bread can be magically suffused by His presence—the very conception is magical—and men will naturally and logically assume that whoever eats the bread receives Christ. My friends, it is a solemn truth that the Lord cannot be gained by such mechanism. We must lift up our hearts if we would have God come and dwell with us. Moreover, it is a harmful superstition that a Church in which consecrated bread is kept is for that reason the more holy. Such a belief can only be upheld by the valueless arguments by which the Hindu defends idolatry. The Divine Spirit of Christ is everywhere: He cannot be located in material things. Wherever the spirit of man rises to enthusiasm for goodness and truth, Christ's Spirit is present. Christ dwells not among things that are cold and inert, but with the living Christian struggling, seeking, waiting upon God. We understand sacramental grace in its fullness and power, not by foolishly speaking of bread as if it were God Himself, but when the heavens open for us and for a moment we see the whole of creation as the expression of God's purpose and He Himself in wisdom, might and love the goal to Whom our striving leads and the end where man's restless spirit has peace.

XXXI

MAN'S CREATION: BLIND MECHANISM OR DIVINE DESIGN? [1]

"The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty giveth me life."—Job xxxiii. 4.

Few topics interest men more at the present time than the relation between science and religion. Though the situation shows some signs of improvement, there is still much misunderstanding as to the effect of scientific discovery on religious belief. In part this follows from an unfortunate silence too long maintained by religious teachers so that the average man does not know what are the traditional beliefs which the normal educated Christian now rejects. It also results that such a man exaggerates the extent to which scientific conclusions affect the main Christian position.

In private life I hardly ever meet a person who denies the truth of evolution; but obviously this biological theory is still regarded with horror by large numbers of my fellow countrymen. Most of my friends, I suppose, accept the Christian view of life and yet find that it is as natural to reject the story of the Fall as to refuse to accept the Old Testament belief that the earth is the fixed centre of the Universe. Nevertheless, the delusion is widespread that if there was no Fall there can be no sin. One would have

[1] A Sermon preached in St. Paul's Cathedral on Sunday, October 16th, 1927.

thought that the fact of sin in human life was such a matter of constant experience that it could not be disputed. Yet I have been so often told that "if there was no serpent in the Garden of Eden there can be no sin," that I conclude that there are many to whom this appears to be a logical proposition.

I do not, however, wish to discuss such questions to-day. I would address myself to a more fundamental issue. Christian theology has always emphasised that man was the object of God's special care. It taught that God, in creating humanity, designedly fashioned beings who could respond to His love and fit themselves for endless experience of that love in Eternal life after death.

To-day, however, many will affirm—in my opinion erroneously—that science has shown that such Christian beliefs cannot be maintained. I have heard it maintained, with more force than grace, that humanity appeared on this earth as inevitably as toadstools grow in a dilapidated cow-shed. Man, it is implied, has resulted automatically from the blind working of mechanical processes. It is thus suggested that the routine of the Universe is such that man was bound to appear in due course and that his existence has no particular significance or value. This, of course, constitutes a complete repudiation of the old belief that "the Spirit of God hath made me and the breath of the Almighty giveth me life."

I do not deny that it is possible to hold such opinions and to advance arguments in their favour. But what I wish to maintain to-day is that modern science gives them no special support. In fact, from a scientific survey we get, so far as I can see, nothing to encourage us to repudiate the Christian belief that man's creation

was divinely planned. I would insist that we cannot separate God's laws from laws of nature. The old dualism of natural and supernatural seems to me unsound; but I suggest that the sequence of natural processes which has led to man can be legitimately interpreted in terms of Divine causation.

First of all, the planetary system to which the earth belongs appears to be a somewhat rare object in the stellar Universe. Our sun, it is true, is but one of a system of some two thousand million stars. But most of these stars seem to be either without satellites or to consist of a pair of suns. The solar system apparently arose, as it were by accident, from the near approach to our sun of a wandering star. Enormous tides were thus raised on the sun so that a vast disruption ensued and produced the planets. But the stars are so far apart that similar approaches must be somewhat rare. Therefore planets like the earth, fit for the support of human life, must be equally rare in our Universe.[1]

In the second place it is somewhat surprising that the earth has had for so long atmospheric and temperature conditions suited to the existence and therefore to the evolution of living things. As is generally known, uranium is a radio-active element which slowly disintegrates and produces lead. By investigating how much lead has been produced from uranium in the oldest rocks of the earth the age of the earth can be determined. We find in this way that the earth is roughly about a thousand million years old. It would appear, moreover, that at least a hundred million years have elapsed since the earliest rocks containing

[1] The known data are not such as to permit of precise calculation; but according to Dr. J. H. Jeans' latest view, the number of solar systems in our Universe might run into hundreds of thousands.

fossils were laid down; and inasmuch as an animal with a skeleton is a relatively highly evolved organism, it is therefore probable that two or three hundred million years have passed since primitive life began on the earth. During this enormous time the earth's temperature must have been fairly constant; for if the temperature of the whole earth were much above the boiling-point of water or below its freezing-point life, to say the least, would not flourish. But a relatively constant temperature for hundreds of millions of years is hardly what we should expect of a satellite of a sun constantly radiating out vast stores of energy.

Perhaps the water and clouds on the earth's surface have helped to keep our temperature fairly steady. Most certainly without water there could have been no living organism on the earth. Yet our satellite the moon has no water and apparently has been waterless since its birth. Again, animal life on earth is, so far as we know, impossible without oxygen. How did the oxygen appear in the air we breathe? One theory is that originally it only existed in combination with other elements, and that by the break-up of chemical compounds our atmosphere has been formed. However that may be, it is certain that both air and water-vapour might easily have been lost when the earth was born. The facts thus briefly and baldly stated surely leave us with the feeling that ingenious rather than blind adjustments fitted the earth to be the cradle of the living organisms from which man has sprung.

Take a more particular fact. We know that more than once the climate of England has been of arctic severity, while on the contrary in Greenland at other times semi-tropical vegetation has flourished. We do

not understand the cause of such fluctuations of climate, nor can we state why the alternations were not so violent that life's evolutionary process was stopped. Yet no such calamity occurred. It even seems to be true that from the change to a harsh climate good resulted. Primitive man in Western Europe experienced a severe Ice Age and anthropologists believe that the struggle to survive under adverse circumstances was of no little importance in shaping and accelerating his development.

Add to such considerations the fact that man and his mammalian ancestors succeeded in resisting disease. The great lizards which lorded it over the earth in the Jurassic era vanished: probably they were destroyed by some micro-organism. There are gloomy zoologists who predict a similar fate for the human race. But whatever the future may hold, man and his animal forbears have so far resisted microbic disease. We are here, products of hundreds of millions of years of evolution. But it cannot be said that science affirms that our existence is the result of a straightforward series of mechanical transformations. It would rather appear that what we may term lucky accidents and happy escapes have permitted our safe arrival. If the Christian attributes the lucky accidents to the providence of God, Who in His infinite wisdom has contrived the slowly-maturing plan by which the human race has been brought into existence, modern science will bring no cogent arguments against him.

There is one further consideration that I would put before you. Is the development of human personality which has occurred since man sprang from the ape exactly and only what might have been expected? A negative answer must surely be given. Man and

the gorilla have simultaneously emerged as a result of such closely parallel processes that experts hesitated as to whether the famous Taungs skull was that of a youth or of a young gorilla. Man's first cousin, if we may so term him, is hardly a creature of sweetness and light. Yet gorilla and civilised man are products of the same machinery : a machinery, however, within which unexpected and inexplicable variations constantly arise. The source of these variations, which are the raw material of evolution, is unknown. It is natural to think of them as steps in the Divine plan so that evolution becomes simply God's method of creation. Furthermore, Christian theologians hold that the main reason for believing that man is of special importance in God's sight lies in what man is in himself. Alike in the search for truth which, for example, dominates the man of science, and in the moral consciousness which makes men place goodness above self-interest, man shows that he is more than an animal. He has, and the animals have not, spiritual understanding and moral enthusiasm. Through his moral and spiritual qualities he is not merely a creature of space and time, but makes contact with the infinite and eternal Spirit from Whom come goodness, beauty, and truth.

I confess that in myself the conviction is irresistible that the purpose of evolution is revealed in the moral and spiritual development of humanity. So I would say that all that has led up to our existence, all that chapter of fortunate accidents to which we owe our being, is a plan willed by God for spiritual ends. In short, " the Spirit of God hath made me." Man may not be the end of life's terrestrial advance. Beings of a different physical structure, with qualities which in

relation to ourselves we may term super-moral or super-spiritual, may replace humanity in the millions of years that apparently yet remain before the earth shall cease to support life. None the less, civilised man is, or can make himself, worthy of God's care and love. He can show such qualities of heart and mind that, were he blotted out at death, the values of the Universe would be diminished. I hold to the conviction that God will not let perish what is worth preserving. He has not made man for naught.

There are some, as I know, who can contemplate extinction at death without any feeling of dismay or resentment. For myself, I find intolerable the thought that I might perish and never understand the great mysteries of the Universe which all my life I have longed to discover. The ground-plan of the Universe is unreasonable if there is implanted in us a burning desire to know its mysteries and we are none the less fated to perish in ignorance. The scheme of things is equally unreasonable if man's personality is destroyed at death so that all his spiritual achievements are wasted save for such fragments as may survive through his influence on others.

Thus as we try to combine reason and knowledge, we are led to maintain the old view that God planned man's creation and present progress. There is no cogent evidence that we have been brought into existence as the result of the working of some blind mechanism. Fortunate combinations of circumstances in the history of the development to which we owe our being tend to make us view the whole as a divine operation. Variations which are the raw material of evolution are naturally to be regarded as manifestations of God's creative activity.

Jesus affirmed that God is active in all earth's processes. As I grow in knowledge and experience I find this teaching increasingly reasonable. In particular I believe that God's activity has been shown not least in the creation and continuing development of man.

THE END

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